PERO TAFUR

Travels and Adventures

MALCOLM LETTS

THE BROADWAY TRAVELLERS

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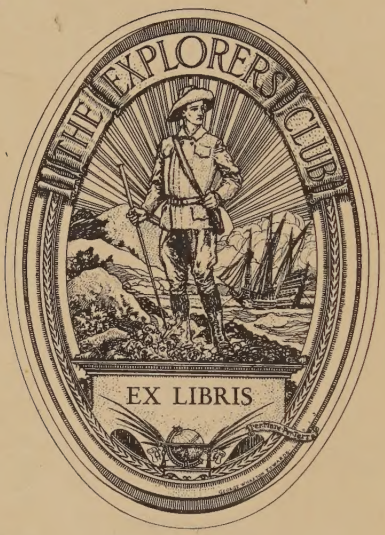

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First published in Madrid some fifty years ago, this narrative of the travels of a Castilian knight in Europe and the Near East has been unduly neglected. Tafur was a person of outstanding qualities. His experiences at the various courts he visited would alone make his record noteworthy. But there is much more. Tafur was deeply interested in traffic and commerce, and his descriptions of some of the great trading centres of the day are most valuable. Tafur tells us nothing but the plain truth, while his shrewdness and dry humour give to his book a welcome and unusual quality of freshness.

PERO TAFUR

TRAVELS AND
ADVENTURES
1435–1439

BROADWAY TRAVELLERS

THE BROADWAY TRAVELLERS

EDITED BY SIR E. DENISON ROSS
AND EILEEN POWER

TRAVELS AND ADVENTURES OF PERO TAFUR, 1435–1439

AKBAR AND THE JESUITS

THE TRAVELS OF HUC AND GABET IN TARTARY AND TIBET

DON JUAN OF PERSIA

SELECTIONS FROM THE TRAVELS OF IBN BATTŪTA

THE ENGLISH AMERICAN BY THOMAS GAGE, 1631

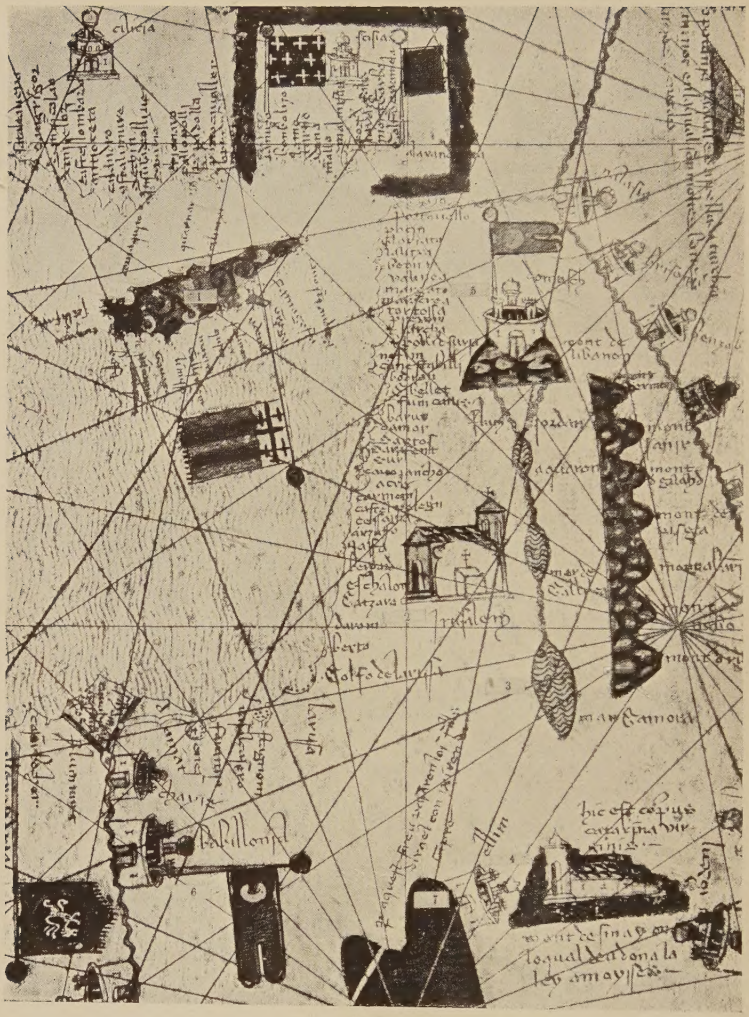
LITERARY REMAINS OF THOMAS AND ANTONY SHERLEY

THE VOYAGES AND TRAVELS OF MANDELSLO

THE TRAVELS OF CLAVIJO AND SCHILTBERGER

THE NEW-FOUND WORLDE OR ANTARTICKE, BY ANDRÉ THEVET, 1568

Published by
HARPER & BROTHERS



SECTION FROM A CATALAN MAP OF 1375

[front.

THE BROADWAY TRAVELLERS

EDITED BY SIR E. DENISON ROSS
AND EILEEN POWER

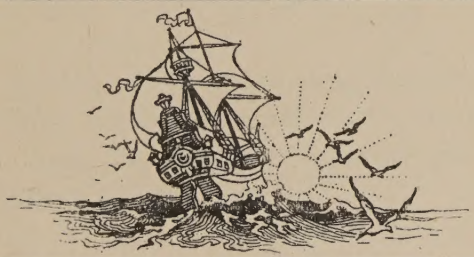
PERO TAFUR

* * *

TRAVELS AND ADVENTURES

1435–1439

Translated and Edited with an Introduction by Malcolm Letts



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NOTE AS TO DATES

CERTAIN dates can be ascertained from Tafur's narrative, and it may be useful to give them now (Tafur mentions no dates).

Leaving out the vexed question of the year of the attack on Gibraltar, as to which see ch. i, note 1, Tafur must have sailed from Spain towards the end of 1435.

1435, *December* (*after 25th*).—Tafur was at Genoa during the rising against Milan (ch. ii, note 6).

1436, *May* 17 (*Ascension Day*).—He sailed from Venice for the Holy Land (ch. v).

1437, *October* 29.—He was at Rhodes when the Grand Master, Antonio de Fluvian, died (ch. xii, note 4).

1437, *November* 24.—He was at Constantinople when the Emperor sailed for Europe (ch. xiv, note 2).

1438, *May* 22 (*Ascension Day*).—He returned to Venice.

1439, *January* 16.—Having completed his European travels, Tafur was back in Ferrara on the day when the Pope and the Emperor departed for Florence (ch. xxviii, note 1).

PREFACE

In offering this translation of the travels of Pero Tafur to English readers, I desire to express my sincere thanks to Miss A. de Alberti, an acknowledged authority on early Spanish, for much valuable advice and assistance, to Miss A. J. Mayes for drawing the map, and to my wife, who has helped me in many ways. The Introduction reproduces with additional matter a leading article written by me for *The Times Literary Supplement* last year. I am indebted to the editor for permission to reprint it.

I have not followed the Spanish editor in the matter of notes, but have written my own, and for convenience I have divided the narrative into chapters. Nevertheless, my predecessor's work, particularly his *Catálogo Biográfico*, running into more than 200 pages, must not be overlooked by historians and students. This *Catálogo* is a veritable "Who's Who" of the period, and I cannot close my labours without expressing my unqualified admiration for a most scholarly piece of work which is too little known.

No complete translation of Tafur has hitherto appeared in any language, but a German version of some portions dealing with Germany was published by Dr. Konrad Häbler in 1887 (Zeitschrift für allgemeine Geschichte, vol. iv).

The frontispiece is reproduced by kind permission from a copy of the original map in the possession of the Royal Geographical Society.

MALCOLM LETTS.

London,
Easter, 1926.

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The Travels and Adventures of Pero Tafur

INTRODUCTION

Tafur's travels were first printed in Madrid in 1874, and were edited by D. Marcos Jiménez de la Espada. The full title is: *Andanças é Viajes de Pero Tafur por diversas partes del mundo avidos* (1435–1439), and the work appeared as vol. 8 of the *Coleccion de Libros Españoles raros ó curiosos*. The editor used the only known manuscript from the library of the Colegio mayor de S. Bartolomé de Cuenca in Salamanca, now in the Biblioteca Patrimonial (sala 2ª. J. pl. 4). This appears to be an early 18th century copy of an earlier manuscript. It is written on 91½ folios, and preserves the spelling, the irregular punctuation, as well as the turns of speech current in the middle of the 15th century. It also shows the condition of the earlier manuscript, indicating by dots the blanks due to omissions of words or lines, or to damage due to careless handling or age. It may be inferred that this earlier manuscript was written in two columns, that about a third of a page was missing at the top of p. 1, which contained on one side the title of the book and half the prologue, and on the other the rest of the prologue, that a few lines of the text at the beginning were illegible and that the last page of the manuscript was missing, since the narrative breaks off abruptly. Calculating the missing portion by the space given in Clavijo's *Embassy to the Court of Timour*, 1403–1406, to the return journey from Sicily to Spain, Tafur's account of his voyage from Sardinia to the coast of Spain would not fill more than a page. No further

manuscript has since been discovered, but much interesting information concerning Tafur himself has come to light since the original introduction was written.

In an article published in 1902 in the *Boletin de la Real Academia de la Historia* (vol. xli, pt. iv) D. Rafael Ramírez de Arellano has collected facts and documents which clear up a number of obscurities. He shows that Tafur was born in Cordova, not in Seville as he told the Sultan's chief interpreter at Cairo (see p. 72), and that he was the son of Juan Diaz Tafur, a native of Cordova. He seems to have been born about 1410, so that he would be 25 years old, more or less, when he set out on his travels. Returning to Spain in 1439, Tafur settled down, and some time before 1452 he married Doña Juana de Horozco, but the exact date of the marriage is not known. There was issue of the marriage, a son, who appears to have predeceased his father, and three daughters. Doña Juana's will, executed in 1490, is printed in the article above referred to, and from that document it seems clear that Tafur died about 1484. He must have spent some time revising his narrative, and there are several indications in the document itself that he was busy with it between 1453 and 1457, but he also took a prominent part in local affairs and in the political disturbances of the period. He and his son both held office as aldermen in 1479. The earlier registers of the corporation of Cordova are not in existence, but Tafur's name appears regularly in the records for that year. He seems to have taken his duties very seriously and did not miss a single session. His name does not appear after 1479, but the registers are very incomplete. His signature from a document in the city archives is reproduced at the end of the article already mentioned, a fine specimen of character and flourish.

So much for the traveller. Before dealing with his experiences in Europe and the Near East, and tracing his

itinerary, it may be well to note the period in which he was travelling, for he belongs for all practical purposes to the Middle Ages. When he was abroad the art of printing was still unknown. The New World was undiscovered, and scarcely a hint of the new learning was to be observed even in Italy. It was an age of disorder and darkness, of warfare and private feuds, of poverty of mind and expression which it is not now easy to realize. It is doubtful if any thought of change was in men's minds, although the world was changing steadily before their eyes. The Eastern Empire was rocking to its fall. Tafur had barely reached Constantinople when the Emperor and the Patriarch set sail upon their last desperate effort to reconcile the Churches, and obtain men and assistance in the struggle against the Turk. The history of their undertaking can be read in Gibbon, their portraits are preserved in Benozzo Gozzoli's frescoes in the Riccardi Palace, and some account of their life and state in Ferrara can be read in Tafur's later pages; but the Patriarch found a grave in Europe, and the Emperor returned to his decaying empire with empty hands to meet the angry denunciations of his people. In Europe the Church, which was just recovering from the Great Schism, was torn in sunder by the dissensions of the Council at Basle. The Pope was an exile. Italy was harassed and at cross-purposes, a prey to petty jealousies and selfish scheming. As for the Empire, it was in the greatest state of confusion. The Emperor Sigismund had died without heirs before Tafur returned to Europe, and Albert of Hapsburg, his son-in-law, had succeeded to his dominions. Albert was a man of ability and character, and he made a great impression on Tafur, who was his guest at Breslau, but a year later he, too, was dead, and everything was once more in disorder. Tafur was prevented, by the plague which was raging, from visiting France; had he done so he would have

found the country in a state of demoralization, and sadly devastated by the wars of the fourteenth and early fifteenth centuries. Joan of Arc had been dead seven years; the English, having been deprived of the Burgundian alliance, had lost Paris and were shortly to be driven out of Rouen. In Tafur's own country affairs were such that they might well have kept him at home fighting with the King, his master. The prosperity and magnificence of the Court of Burgundy must have stood out in striking contrast to the misery and unrest elsewhere. Philip the Good was rising to the apex of his power, and had already laid the foundations of what was later to become the mightiest and wealthiest monarchy known to the West in the fifteenth century. Of the splendour of Philip's Court, and of the wealth and prosperity of Bruges, Antwerp and Ghent, there is ample evidence in Tafur's pages. Here, indeed, was a land of promise; but elsewhere the impression left on the reader is one of disorder, violence, suffering and unrest.

Tafur left Spain in the latter part of 1435 with at least two squires. His first undertaking was to join his kinsman, Don Enrique de Guzman, Count of Niebla, in an attack on the Moorish stronghold of Gibraltar. The attempt, which was unsuccessful, cost Don Enrique his life, and the traveller was obliged to return with the discomfited troops to San Lucar. Tafur then embarked in a ship—one of a convoy of three—which was bound for Genoa, and after visiting Ceuta he sailed for Malaga which was then in the hands of the Moors. In the Gulf of Lyons a violent storm arose which carried two of the ships far out to sea, but Tafur's vessel managed to keep to its course, and on Christmas Day 1435 he reached Nice. When the traveller arrived at Genoa he was thoroughly worn out. He seems to have had some kind of mystical experience during the storm, or it may have been the

result of sheer terror, but he certainly reached land in a very devout and chastened frame of mind. He became involved almost at once in litigation with certain merchants who refused to honour his bills of exchange, but he had powerful friends, and the defaulters were brought to book.

Tafur describes Genoa in considerable detail with not a few historical touches. He was there during the rising against the Duke of Milan which took place at the end of December 1435, but he was able to pass out in safety. The condottiere Niccolo Piccinino sent him into Portovenere where he took ship for Leghorn, passing on by way of Pisa to Florence and Bologna. Here he found the exiled Pope Eugenius IV, who blessed him and gave him leave to proceed to the Holy Land. We next find our traveller at Venice, but as no pilgrim ships were available until Ascension, Tafur filled up the interval of waiting by visiting other parts of Italy.

During Lent he was in Rome, an experience which must have been something of a penance in itself, for Rome in 1436 cannot have been a very pleasant place. The buildings and houses had fallen into decay: the streets, reduced in some cases to marshes or filled with rubbish, were hardly passable. A show of greatness was attempted by means of empty ceremonies and celebrations, but some idea of the actual condition of the city may be gathered from the fact that when Tafur was there wild beasts were breeding in the caves and waste spaces. The traveller picked his way through the narrow streets and busied himself with the churches and relics; he has left us, within limits, an interesting description of Old St. Peter's, but as for the antiquities, irreparable damage had been done, he tells us, by foreign kings who had sacked the city, and by Pope Gregory the Great who, seeing that the pilgrims coming to Rome for the good of their souls had their pious thoughts

disturbed by the sight of so much magnificence, took upon himself to throw down what time and the hand of man had spared—a story which impressed Tafur to such an extent that he repeats it three times.

Tafur now passed on to Viterbo, Perugia and Assisi. At Gubbio he resorted to an extraordinary subterfuge (the need for which I am at a loss to understand) in order to obtain an audience with Count Guid' Antonio da Montefeltro, a pious man, who treated him with great kindness, and on Ascension Day 1436 he sailed for the East.

Life at Jerusalem at this time must have been an extremely profitable business for the infidel, as most Christians found to their cost. Like other pilgrims, Tafur paid the fees due from one of his rank, and gazed with the eye of faith upon the innumerable holy places, the Sepulchre itself, the spot called Compas, which Our Lord signified as the centre of the earth, the houses of the Virgin Mary, of Pilate and Caiaphas, the palace of David, the place where the Apostles composed the Creed, and Christ the Lord's Prayer, the tree on which Judas hanged himself, and the place of Peter's denial: (the very stone on which the cock stood to crow was shown, although Tafur does not mention it). He visited Bethlehem, and inspected the well into which the star of the Magi fell; from Jericho he reached the Jordan, where he bathed, and where a German gentleman of the party unfortunately got drowned, and on the shores of the Dead Sea he sampled the pleasant-looking but bitter Dead Sea fruit. When the travellers were ascending the mountain Quarantana, where Our Lord was tempted of the devil, a second mishap befell them, for a squire of France, going to the assistance of a lady, lost his foothold and, falling from a great height, was dashed in pieces on the rock below. Further trouble awaited them at the church on the site where Lazarus was raised from the dead, for here a

quarrel arose with the officer in charge, who demanded tribute. This was refused, whereupon the officer and his men attacked the party and wounded some of them. The pilgrims and their guard retaliated and, capturing their assailants, carried them to a place not far off, where they found the Governor of Jerusalem, who chopped off the upstart officer's head without more ado. These events cannot be said to have damped the ardour of the pilgrims, or even to have affected their spirits. A dead squire, a decapitated soldier, or a drowned German gentleman were matters for comment possibly, but not for concern. Tafur relates the circumstances with complete detachment, and then placidly resumes his sightseeing. Job's dunghill, a considerable attraction in earlier days, seems by this time to have disappeared, for the pilgrims did not continue their journey to the Land of Uz, but returned at once to Jerusalem.

Not content with his previous adventures, Tafur now disguised himself as a Moor and penetrated into the Mosque of Omar, an extremely foolish proceeding which might well have cost him his life, for any Jew or Gentile found therein would certainly have been killed at sight. He was also anxious to visit the monastery of St. Catherine on Mount Sinai, a very perilous undertaking, but a caravan had just departed and he was advised to return to Cyprus and obtain a safe-conduct to Cairo, from which place he could make the journey.

Cyprus at this time was almost at the end of its greatness. Famagusta was in the possession of Genoa, and the island was under the rule of the weak and vicious Janus III, whose father had been for fifteen months a prisoner in Egypt, and whose main business in life seemed to be the raising of the heavy tribute payable to the Sultan which was his inheritance. Anyone travelling from Cyprus to Cairo might be pre-

sumed to be carrying treasure for the Sultan, and was therefore not likely to be molested, and Tafur had no difficulty in obtaining a commission from the King, armed with which he set out for Cairo. At Damietta he found the place overrun with weasels, and preserving contact with the court at Cairo by means of carrier pigeons. Here he had an experience which nearly cost him his life, for certain Moors accused him of being a spy, and it was probably the recollection of this escape which made him anxious on one or two occasions afterwards to conceal his identity. He gives us a remarkably accurate description of the habits of the crocodile, which he calls cocatriz, and from hearsay a less satisfactory account of the hippopotamus.

At Cairo he made friends at once with the Sultan's chief interpreter, a renegade Jew of Seville, and it seems clear that in order to secure this highly-placed official's good-will, Tafur claimed to be his fellow citizen, although there is little doubt that he was born in Cordova. In any event, he obtained a very valuable friend who received him in his house and showered kindnesses upon him. Tafur had audience with the Sultan and carried through successfully the business with which he was entrusted. Then, after seeing the sights of Cairo and visiting the Pyramids, he set off for Mount Sinai. It was a terrible experience: the travellers were grievously afflicted by sand and heat, and the journey occupied fifteen days. While there Tafur conceived the idea of journeying on to India. He discussed the project with the Prior, who told him that a caravan from the East was due in a few days and advised him to await its arrival before making any plans. When it came it brought with it a very famous traveller, Nicolo de' Conti, whose fame in after years was second only to that of Marco Polo. Here again Tafur thought it necessary to descend to subterfuge, for when they met he told de' Conti that he was an Italian. De'

Conti quite obviously did not believe him, whereupon Tafur, perceiving him to be a grave and discreet person, allowed the truth to be known. De' Conti persuaded Tafur to desist from his proposal and entertained him with the ſtory of his adventures. Not being on oath, as he was later when he was beguiling the Papal Secretary, Poggio, he added a number of highly coloured details which Tafur swallowed with the greateſt relish. Tafur returned with the caravan to Cairo, the trials of the journey being entirely forgotten in the delight of liſtening to de' Conti's narrative, and from Cairo Tafur visited Alexandria. He then returned to Cyprus to give an account of his ſtewardship. He was extremely well received, and had the climate been better, it is probable that he would have taken service there, and we should have loſt the reſt of a very valuable narrative of travel.

Tafur now sailed for Rhodes and very nearly loſt his life. His ship was attacked by Moors, who sank the cargo boat which was following and drowned the crew. Tafur's vessel slipped away in the darkness, but it was a near thing. At Rhodes he found the Grand Maſter dying and was able to witness the election of his successor. The ceremony is described in detail and should be of great value to any future historian of the Order. Another adventure awaited the traveller in the island of Chios, for here he suffered shipwreck and was left for some time in the water, clinging to a piece of wreckage, and it was only with great difficulty that he could be rescued. He then visited the site of Troy, and finally reached Conſtantinople some time in November 1437.

Tafur believed himself to have been descended from the Emperors of the Eaſt; and immediately on arrival he sought audience with the Emperor, John VIII Palaeologus, and endeavoured to unravel the myſteries of the family tree; but the Emperor, who was reigning

in something like subjection to the Turks, had other things to think of. He was just setting out for Europe on an attempt to unite the Churches and to obtain supplies, and he endeavoured to persuade Tafur to accompany him. But this was not at all what the traveller had in mind, and he set out at once for the Turkish headquarters, to see the Grand Turk, Amurath II, himself. He was well received, and took careful note of the Potentate's state and person. He describes him as serious in aspect, about forty-five years of age, of a goodly stature and handsome—a description which contrasts oddly with that of another traveller, who calls him a little, short, thick man, with the physiognomy of a Tartar! We next find the traveller at Trebizond as the guest of John IV Comnenus, who had only recently murdered his father and buried him with great pomp. He had further taken an infidel to wife, and was altogether not the kind of person to appeal to an orthodox Spaniard; so Tafur left him to his fate and sailed for Kaffa, the chief base of Genoese trade in the Black Sea, and the greatest Catholic colony *in partibus infidelium*. It was a busy, bustling place, larger than Seville, and full of strange sights. Here were merchants bartering with strangers from the Far East, for silks and spices, gold and jewels, furs, skins, and queer, unfamiliar beasts from the unknown; for Kaffa was on the great commercial route from the Bosphorus to the Don and the Volga, and was thus in direct communication with China and Central Asia. In the slave market Tafur purchased a man and two girls, whom he carried back with him to Spain. He visited the headquarters of the Grand Khan and seems to have entertained the idea of penetrating farther into Tartary; but wiser counsels prevailed, and he returned to Constantinople and civilization.

The picture of Constantinople preserved in Tafur's

pages is a very sad one. The streets were dirty and neglected. The Imperial Palace was half ruined, and the people were vicious, badly clothed and poverty-stricken. Continuously threatened by the Turks, neglected by the West, its majesty decayed and its life eaten up with corruption, the city's greatness was nothing but a memory. Tafur visited and described the churches and holy places, but without much enthusiasm. Even the serpent column failed to move him. Possibly he did not know its history. Had he done so he might well have paused before a monument which, alone amidst disruption and decay, seemed still to hold some fading memories of the glory that was passed, and which was so soon to witness another act in the age-long struggle between East and West. Even while Tafur was there the Turks made a feint of attacking, and had to be bought off with presents, but the time for presents was almost over. Twenty years later this city of the Caesars and the Church, most gallantly but hopelessly defended, passed into the hands of the infidel.

Tafur now sailed for Venice and turned his attention to Europe. During the voyage he persuaded the ship's captain to land a boat in the Dardanelles to rescue some Christian slaves, and in the fighting which ensued he was wounded. Nor was his wound healed until he reached Basle. Once more he was nearly wrecked, and there is a very human touch in his remark that had he reached the mainland instead of an island, nothing would have induced him to put to sea again. He landed safely in Venice on Ascension Day 1438, just two years after he had set out. Here he encountered other Spanish pilgrims who were sailing for the Holy Land, and after a dispute with the Customs authorities, who had confiscated his goods and slaves, he settled down to explore the city.

Most of us would give a good deal to have seen

Venice in the fifteenth century, and Tafur's enthusiasm is very catching. He witnessed the "Marriage of the Sea," informed himself on matters of government and history, and was delighted with the gondolas. The city, he tells us, was as clean and pleasant as a large room. It was well paved and bricked, so that in winter there was no mud, and in summer no dust. The sanitary arrangements were primitive in the extreme, but spices and sweet-smelling scents could be purchased everywhere, and the people carried them constantly in their hands to counteract the evil odours. Tafur visited the arsenal, and saw ten galleys completely fitted out while they were being towed past the windows of the storehouses. Every article was handed out of its special window and stowed away, and by the time the boats had reached the end of the dock they had on board their full complement of men and stores, and were equipped from end to end and ready for the sea. It is not claiming too much to say that Tafur's description of Venice is one of the most important that has come down to us.

Tafur now left his goods at Venice and set off in earnest upon his European travels.

At Ferrara he encountered the Pope and the Emperor of the East (the latter was suffering from a bad attack of gout). He attended a sitting of the Council, shaved off his beard, dined at the Emperor's table and relates in distressing detail the tragic domestic upheaval which deprived the reigning Marquis at once of his wife and heir. At Milan he contrived to have speech with Filippo Maria Visconti, who as a rule denied himself to every stranger. Then, crossing by the St. Gothard Pass, he reached Basle, where the remnant of the Council was still sitting. At the Baths he was healed of his wound and watched the ladies disporting themselves in the water, as Poggio had done before him. He then passed down the Rhine, which

he describes as the most beautiful stretch of river in the world, to Cologne. Here he was received by the Archbishop, Dietrich von Mörs, who showed him the sights, the castles, monasteries, and churches, and introduced him to the great people of the city. The cathedral, still unfinished, must have looked much as it does in Memlinc's shrine of St. Ursula, but everyone was talking of a wonderful miracle which had happened a few days previously in the chapel of the Three Kings. A large stone had fallen, whilst it was being lifted, directly over the spot where the bodies were lying, whereupon the whole chapel took one step to the right, and the stone fell upon the ground, leaving the sacred bodies uninjured. From Cologne the traveller passed on to the Low Countries, visiting Malines and Brussels, where he was most graciously received by Duke Philip the Good. The small boy running to and fro was Charles the Bold, whose extravagant schemes of conquest and whose tragic death were later to break up his dominions, and throw his people into the arms of Austria and Spain. Tafur gives an interesting picture of the magnificence of the Court of Burgundy. He was received by the Bastard of St. Pol, one of the foremost soldiers of his day, and such grandeur and pomp Tafur had never seen before. The town was filled with great folk. Every day there were pageants, tourneys and feats of skill. The Duchess was beautiful and gracious beyond compare, and as for the Duke, he was a most noble prince, of great virtue, very handsome of face and figure, and, moreover, as gallant of manner as might be. Bruges, Ghent and Antwerp all greatly impressed the traveller. Indeed, his descriptions of Bruges, still almost at the height of its prosperity, and of its harbour at Sluys, are by far the most detailed and valuable which have so far been discovered.

A curious adventure now befell the traveller. He

was journeying along the Rhine, in company with a number of prelates who were returning to the Council at Basle, when in the neighbourhood of Mainz they were seized by a nobleman, who had his own views of the proceedings of the Council, and all were carried off to an adjoining castle. Here they suffered the closest confinement for fourteen days, although the hospitality shown them was lavish. Indeed, we gather that Tafur had to sit up night after night, drinking and carousing with his captors, until his digestion was seriously impaired. At last the prisoners were set at liberty, but now came the crowning scandal. Tafur had been disarmed by a knight specially imported for the occasion, and the base fellow had mislaid his sword. The outraged nobleman blazed and thundered, invoked the heavens, and poured forth his wrath upon his captor and all his household. Finally, as he was shaking off the dust from his feet preparatory, it would seem, to returning to Spain to fetch an army and lay waste the lands of the miscreant Duke, a retainer rode up with the trusty sword, and all was well once more.

Tafur now made his way in the direction of Prague to pay his respects to Albert II, the King of the Romans. He was not there, but was found eventually at Breslau, on the very outskirts of civilization, where the travellers arrived at Christmas, 1438. Tafur was received with great respect. Albert paid him every attention, finding partners for him at the Court ball and holding the candle to him on several occasions, and eventually investing him with the Order of the Dragon. It was not without difficulty that Tafur could obtain licence to depart; but at last he was suffered to do so, and, carrying with him a silver bowl as a present, he set out for Vienna in company with a party of knights. The journey was a very trying one, and the cold was so intense that Tafur's teeth almost fell out of his mouth. At a short distance from Vienna Tafur left the main

party and proceeded alone with his servants. They were attacked almoſt at once by two noblemen, with intent to rob if not to murder, and it was only due to their excellent horses that the travellers contrived to escape. Later that day, while Tafur was supping at his inn, who should ride up but the selfsame marauding noblemen. Tafur at once demanded an explanation, which was readily given. They were loth to have caused him any inconvenience, they said, but they were poor noblemen, and how could they exiſt if not by violence and robbery? Tafur pointed out that he, too, was a nobleman and poor, and was, moreover, a ſtranger in the midſt of them. The gentlemen of the road thereupon humbled themselves and craved pardon, ſuggeſting, very naively, that they should depart and rob someone else in order to pay the expenses of Tafur's entertainment at the inn! It says much for our traveller's good nature, and his views of the sacred obligations of knighthood, that attackers and attacked were soon seated at the same table eating their meal together at the charge of the latter.

At Vienna Tafur paid his reſpects to Albert's conſort, Elizabeth, the daughter of the Emperor Sigismund. She inſtructed certain of her gentlemen to entertain him, and once more inveſted him with the Order of the Dragon, ſtating that the Order was at her disposal alone, as the daughter of the Emperor, and that her husband had no authority to beſtow it, a nice point of domeſtic precedence which was no doubt hotly debated between the spouses. A lady of Elizabeth's force of character, who, a year later, widowed and desolate, could ſteal the sacred crown of Hungary and cause it to be set on the head of her newly born son, was not likely to give up readily any dignity which attached to her in right of her house.

Travelling now by way of Buda and Neuſtadt, where he encountered the future Emperor and father of

Maximilian, Frederick III, Tafur crossed the Carnic Alps and came once more to Ferrara. The Pope and the Emperor of the East were just about to depart for Florence, and we have a striking description of the Papal progress, or rather flight, for Piccinino's troops were patrolling the roads. Tafur then travelled to Venice in time to witness one of the most marvellous engineering feats of any age, namely the transporting of 25 barks and 6 galleys across the Tyrolese Alps to the Lago di Garda. He paid a flying visit to Florence, and finally took ship for his own country, where he arrived in March or April 1439.

What are the main features which stand out from this really extraordinary narrative? Chiefly, I think, the commercial instincts of the traveller, his business-like methods, and his vivid and intimate descriptions of the great trading centres of Europe and the Near East. Tafur, for all his claims to Imperial descent and his views on the obligations of his rank, was more interested in trade than in anything else. As for the cities he visited, they were well walled and ditched, as large as Valladolid, or Seville, or Cordova. The comparisons hardly ever vary, but place him in a commercial centre such as Kaffa, Pera, Venice, Bruges, Ghent or Antwerp, and his interest is awakened at once. That he was well supplied with this world's goods is clear, but one suspects that his ancestors made their money by trading. At a time when many of the nobility could scarcely sign their names, Tafur had been trained to write with fluency and effect. He had correspondents all over the world upon whom he could draw bills at sight. He remarks again and again upon the benefits of the system, and applauds especially the honesty of the Venetians, who would pay a fellow-trader's debts rather than allow him to default. Prof. Pirenne in the index to his *Histoire de Belgique* by a strange slip refers to Tafur as a

Spanish merchant. Possibly he was not so far from the truth. One feels that our hidalgo could have written an excellent treatise on bills of exchange.

Tafur was not lacking in personal courage. Much fighting had familiarized him with death. He risked his life in the Mosque of Omar; he effected a very gallant rescue of Christian slaves in the Dardanelles; he could speak his mind with almost foolhardy directness to the usurping Emperor of Trebizond, and he told the Sultan's chief interpreter at Cairo in no uncertain terms what he thought of his master's ideas of justice. Added to this Tafur always makes light of his own misfortunes and never grumbles. His outlook is quite simple and human. There is something rather moving in his avowal, after the terrors of a storm at sea, that until then he had not known God. He saved the life of a boatswain who should have been hanged at the yard-arm, and his conduct at Sluys, where a poor woman offered him her two daughters for a little bread, stamps him as a very courteous and gallant gentleman. Like other travellers he tells us much that is valueless, and at times omits the very things we desire most to know, but his style, though stilted, has warmth and colour, and we could ill spare his pictures of life long since passed away.

Of the people he met he was undoubtedly most impressed by the Turks, the Venetians, and the Flemings. France he did not visit. England, except for two or three stray references, might never have existed.

PROLOGUE

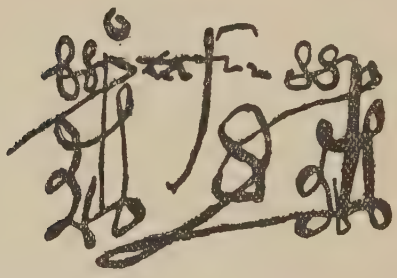
HERE begins the prologue addressed to the most noble and virtuous Señor Don Fernando de Guzman, Chief Commander of the Order of Calatrava, composed by Pero Tafur upon the treatise which he wrote of his travels and voyages in different parts of the world.

The state of knighthood, O most virtuous Señor, had ever a beginning, but is, indeed, more lasting than any other virtuous office, for the exercise thereof is more appropriate to the noble, and virtue itself is the chief and surest foundation of nobility. A man may be called noble so long as he follows the customs of his predecessors, who not departing from deeds of virtue, gave promise of the continuance of prowess, thus deserving to become the leaders and rulers of men. . . .

From the practice of travelling into foreign lands a man may reasonably hope to attain proficiency in that which prowess demands. Thus hidalgos may grow stout-hearted where, being unknown, they are beset by hardship and peril, striving to show themselves worthy of their ancestors, and by their own deeds to make their virtues known to strangers. Moreover, if by good fortune they escape the perils of the way and return to their native land once more, they may from their experience of different forms of government, and the contrasting qualities of various nations, acquire knowledge of what is most conducive to the public weal and the establishment thereof, which should be the chief endeavour of him who would avoid the name of enemy to what is noble. Therefore, for these and other reasons, and especially in view of the truce between our lord the King Don Juan and the Moors,

our natural enemies, I having both time and opportunity to visit various parts of the world, set forth upon my journey for the attainment of these ends. . . .

I would fain refine that which is gross, and being of your house and lineage, and likewise knowing that such compendiums and writings are agreeable to you, and serve to refresh you after the troubles and anxieties inflicted on your gentle spirit by these restless times; therefore, my most noble Señor, be pleased to read my work and hear the hardships I have suffered in various parts of the world. Accept with love this humble present, in which, knowing, as I do, your true nobility, you will, I trust, find some diversion; the more so since he who sends it has sought and will ever seek with lasting devotion to do you pleasure.



TAFUR'S SIGNATURE FROM A DOCUMENT PRESERVED IN THE ARCHIVES AT CORDOVA.

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CHAPTER I

Departure from San Lucar.—The Count of Niebla.—The attack on Gibraltar.—Gibraltar.—Return to San Lucar.—Cadiz.—The Barbary Coast.—Ceuta.—Malaga.—Cartagena.—The Balearic Isles.—Gulf of Lyons.—A great Storm.—The Riviera.—Genoa.

WE set sail and left the harbour of San Lucar de Barrameda. I travelled in a ship of Galicia, as I had already made preparations for my departure and had no horses and other things necessary for a land journey. That day and the night following we sailed on, and doubling Cape Trafalgar we entered the Straits, and at daylight we reached the promontory of Carnero at the entrance to Gibraltar. We anchored close to the town and saw there a great number of ships and a galley of the King, all of which had come with the Count of Niebla.[1] We found that the Count was encamped about half a league from Gibraltar with 1200 horsemen and 5000 foot soldiers, and his son was there with him. I disembarked and went to see the Count, and he was delighted to meet me, and marvelled how I had been able to come, in view of my recent illness. He took counsel with his knights and told them the reason for his being there, which before had been kept secret. The undertaking was to be as follows. He had been told that in Gibraltar there were not ten Moors who were fighting men, whereas to defend so great a fortress not even a thousand would be sufficient, and that it could be taken by assault. He proposed to muster his horsemen at the entrance which is on land, while he with his men-at-arms launched an attack close to the dockyard, on the side of the mountain where King Alfonso entered. His son Don Juan was to march against the tower of

Tuerto, which is on the mountain. This was to be from the sea. Meanwhile the Biscayans with their ships and the galley were to attack the Casal de Ginoveses which is at the very summit of the mountain.

So he ordered everything, and the next day after Mass each one went to his station. We then set out and drew near to the town, and at low water we all disembarked and moved towards the wall, but that day we did not carry up our artillery, because this was only a test to see how many men were there to defend the place. Nevertheless, as soon as we came up to the wall, fifteen or twenty of our men were killed at once. And we were so occupied that we did not observe how the tide was rising, and we were soon up to our knees in water. As we could do nothing, not having brought our artillery, the Count gave orders to sound the retreat to the sea. The men retired to the boats, but the Count remained behind collecting the others. As he was making for the last boat, with ten or twelve knights who had remained on shore with him, it became clear to the enemy that only a small party was left, and that the others had withdrawn without any orders having been given to cover the retreat with cross-bows and artillery, and that all were taking to the water, and that the last boat was leaving. The Moors thereupon dashed out with horsemen to the number of twenty, with as many foot-soldiers, and as they came up at a gallop, the boat, which was small and heavily laden, capsized, and the Count and all those with him were drowned. Meanwhile the other engagements were proceeding, and the rest of the men had as much work as they could do, except the horsemen on the shore who had no one to fight with. So very sadly, with the loss of so noble a leader both on sea and land, we returned to Castile to San Lucar from which place we had set out.

Gibraltar is a very strong fortress and famous all

the world over. It stands at the mouth of the Straits where the Atlantic Ocean joins the Mediterranean Sea, and it is a very fruitful place. The town commands the entrance to the mainland which is very narrow, and it is about a league from there to the top of the rock. It is very well walled, with orchards, vines and excellent water, and it lies very low on the edge of the sea. Behind it stands the rock which is so high that it seems to reach to the clouds. It rises straight up, and although it looks formidable from the west, it is seen to greater advantage from the east. The harbour, which is very secure, is made by an arm of the sea which runs inland as far as Algeciras, three leagues distant, and the whole way is good anchorage. Leaving there, we sailed through the Straits in view of Cape Tarifa and past Cadiz and other places on the coast, and entered the harbour of Barrameda at San Lucar, where they received us with less lightness of heart than at our departure. I then collected the things I had prepared and put myself aboard a carack owned by Geronimo de Voltajo, who had come from Genoa with two other ships belonging to Esteban Doria and Geronimo Doria, and they had troops to defend them for fear of the Catalans, and most of the Genoese who were in Seville sailed in them, for they carried great riches.

We left the harbour of Cadiz and came to the coast of Barbary, to a town called Arzila, where we had to discharge and take fresh cargo. This town is close to the Cape of Espartel. It belongs to the King of Fez and had then as governor a Moorish knight, called Çalabençala. It is a very fruitful place, but abounds more in animals and fowls than in anything else. We remained there three days. Then we set sail and entered the Straits of Gibraltar, and at the hour of Vespers we espied two large ships which we took to be the Catalans, and we turned back and anchored off

Tangier, but they passed by on their way to Cadiz. The next day we departed and came to Ceuta, where we learned from a Biscayan vessel that those two caracks belonged to the Genoese fleet, and that they came from Genoa to accompany the three of us. We anchored at Ceuta and disembarked, and hailed a sloop and sent letters to Cadiz saying that the caracks should await us there, or that at least they would find us at Malaga, where we had to discharge and take fresh cargoes. That day we remained at Ceuta, and I went about inspecting the city and its surroundings which appeared to me to be very excellent. It showed itself to have been a great place and, without doubt, if the King of Castile[2] owned it and caused it to be embellished, it would, in view of its situation, be one of the most notable places in the world. The soil is generally fruitful, although it is rugged and the country mountainous, but there is a good harbour and much land, and fruit and water are abundant. What is left of the city is sufficiently strong. There is on one side on the mountain a rocky place surrounded by a wall, called *El Alminan*, which would be very remarkable if it were what it ought to be. In these mountains of Ceuta there are more lions than in any other part of the world, and porcupines, apes, panthers, bears and pigs without number. They say that it is doubtful if there is any place so high and mountainous on the African side. This is said to arise from its nearness to the West on the side of the Straits [*sic*].

We departed from Ceuta, and leaving Africa on the right hand, and having Europe on the left, we sailed through the Straits and entered the open sea, and continued along the coast until we anchored on the shore of Malaga, a city belonging to the King of Granada. There the merchants landed and discharged their cargoes and took others. We remained there nine days, and while we were there those caracks

arrived which had passed us, and put their men on board our ships and took in merchandise, and returned to Cadiz for more to take to Flanders. During those nine days we had nothing to do but to admire the city of Malaga which impressed me favourably, both as regards its situation, though it has no port, and its soil, though there is a scarcity of bread; but what there is is good. And there is no shortage of orchards and fruit. The city is flat, for the most part walled, with a castle on either hand and a walled passage running from one to the other which they call Gibralfar. It is full of trade, and if it belonged to us it would be better. But all kinds of merchandise would have to go in from our country, which would never be suffered in any place held by the Moors. The sea flows up to the walls, in such wise that a fleet of galleys could throw out landing stages on to flat land. For the part towards the sea is very low-lying, although it is well defended on its landward side. There are many people there, but rather of the merchant class than skilled in war.

After nine days at Malaga the Genoese collected their goods and armed the ships and set them in order, for they had to coast from headland to headland along the country of the King of Aragon. Sailing onwards, we followed the coast of Granada, past Salobreña, Almuñecar, and Almeria, until we reached Cartagena which is in our country. We entered the harbour, and remained there one day, awaiting news of the Catalans. It is one of the finest harbours, in my judgment, in the world, and the town is excellent. We departed and sailed along the coast of Aragon, by Elche and Alicante, until we came near to Valencia, and there we had advices to leave the coast and take to the open sea. The next day, leaving the coast, we came close to the island of Iviça, belonging to the King of Aragon. So continuing our route, leaving Cataluña and Barcelona on the left hand, we passed the islands

of Majorca and Minorca, which belong to the King of Aragon, and entered the Gulf of Lyons, which is so called as one goes out from it, but at the going in it is called the Gulf of Narbonne.

One day at Vespers such a violent storm arose that we ran before it all that night, and the next day we were far away. The two large caracks were driven under bare poles towards Sardinia, and it was two months before we had news of them, but our ship, which still had its main-sail, although but little of it remained, kept close to the island of Titan, as they call it, off the coast of Provence. This day and the following night we were in constant peril and had much labour, but we ran on and the next day we came to Nice. It was Christmas Eve,[3] and we anchored there and repaired our sails. We then departed and came to Savona, a pleasant city, belonging to Genoa, and remained there for Christmas Day. The following day we set sail, and keeping close inland we passed along the sea-shore, forty miles from Genoa, which is the most beautiful sight in the world. To one who does not know it, the whole coast from Savona to Genoa looks like one continuous city, so well inhabited is it, and so thickly studded with houses.

CHAPTER II

Genoa.—Litigation with certain merchants.—San Lorenzo.—Genoese possessions abroad.—The inhabitants.—A rising.—Sestri Levante.—Portovenere.—Spezia.—Lerici.—Pietrasanta.—Leghorn.—The vessel taken by the Count of Modica.—Niccolò Piccinino.—Pisa.—Florence.—Pistoia.—Bologna.—Pope Eugenius.—Ferrara.—Bills of Exchange.—Venice.

We entered the harbour of Genoa close by the Mole, and were very cheerfully received both by men and women, but they were very sad at the fate of the caracks, as no one knew what had become of them. We disembarked, but before entering the city we went half a league from there to the church of Nuestra Dona que Corona,[1] according to the vow which we had made during the storm. I then took a lodging for the fifteen days that I had to remain in Genoa, and, indeed, I had need of repose, for I was overcome with fatigue, and unhappy, and sea-sick, and quite out of conceit with myself, and this was the first time that I began to know God. For some days I was engaged in litigation with certain merchants who would not honour some bills of exchange which I had. But the Doge[2] and many of the lords of the place showed me much honour and favour, and made the merchants pay me what was mine, with double the costs which they had put me to.

This city is very ancient. They say that it was founded by Janus Prince of Troy[3], after the destruction of that city, and, indeed, it seems to have been the work of a defeated man, for it is placed upon a very high mountain above the sea, and all the houses are like towers of four or five storeys or more, while the streets are very narrow and difficult of access. The soil is very unproductive, but the people are industrious, and they import provisions from all parts of the world,

so that the city is as well supplied as if the land were fruitful. There is an excellent harbour, as well as a mole with a tower and lighthouse, which burns all night, and on the other side of the harbour there is another very high tower, also with a light, so that the entry to the harbour may be known to everyone. All this has been made at great cost. The monasteries are very notable, as are also the churches. The great church is called San Lorenzo, and it is very remarkable, particularly the porch. They keep in it the Holy Grail[4], which is made of a single emerald and is indeed a marvellous relic. This city with all its patrimony is ruled by the people, and by their industry and wisdom they have acquired many cities and towns and castles on the mainland, and many islands in the sea. They own Chios and Mytilene, and in the island of Cyprus they own the city called Famagusta, which they took when they captured the King of Cyprus and carried him to Genoa, both him and his wife.[5] The father of this present King was born there in the Pharos tower, and was called Janus, as he was born in Genoa. They also own Pera, a city which adjoins Constantinople, and a city called Kaffa at the end of the Black Sea, as large or greater than Seville, and in the Sea of Azov they have fortresses, and others in Turkey.

The nation is very powerful at sea, its caracks in particular are the best in the world, and had it not been for the great dissensions which the people have had amongst themselves, their dominion would have extended throughout the world. The inhabitants are very industrious and without vice, nor are they addicted to sensual pleasures, for which the nature of the country is unfavourable. They are very wealthy and orderly. In matters of dress they see to it that if anyone is more richly clad than is necessary, he or she is taxed. They are of a very beautiful complexion, but not handsome of face, although both men and women are well grown,

and they value the women by size: the tallest has the smallest dowry. Widows do not take a second husband, and if they do they suffer in their reputation. In the troubles which the people have had, the Duke of Milan entered the city as ruler with one of the factions, and while I was there the people rose against the Duke[6] and killed one of his captains who was stationed there, who was called Pacino de Alciato, and they destroyed his castle which was near the city. There they showed me the dreadful prison, in which were kept those knights who had been taken by the Kings of Aragon and Navarre. In the sea at Genoa there are few fish, and those very small. Without doubt, if the men of other nations were such travellers throughout the world as are the Genoese, and were so long separated from their homes, the chastity of their wives would be much endangered. But here they value their morals so highly that a woman is hardly ever taken in adultery. If such a thing occurs the penalty is always death.

I departed from Genoa and travelled along the coast, which is thickly inhabited, to Sestri Levante, and from there I came to Portovenere. On that day the people had risen against the Duke of Milan and the King of Aragon, the Duke having given the place to the King. It is an excellent port, with an island in front of it which affords it great protection. The town is very strongly fortified with two castles, the first at one end and the second at the other. From there we sailed to Spezia, a large town belonging to Genoa, and thence to Lerici, a great fortress of the King of Aragon. We next came to Pietrasanta, and at the hour of Vespers we arrived outside Leghorn, the port of Pisa. The Count of Modica had arrived there from Naples with fourteen galleys, and he took our ship and sent to the galleys all those Genoese who had come in it. To me, on the other hand, he showed much honour, and desired

me to depart at once, but certain Catalan knights informed him that I should be in great peril from the armed men in those parts, who were in the pay of the Count Francesco,[7] a man much in favour with the Genoese who was now captain of the Florentines. The Count heard from me how that the town of Portovenere had risen against the King of Aragon, and that Nicolao Pichilino[8] was there with his men, and I returned with him to Lerici. We found the castle in safe keeping, but the town was in revolt, and the rebels plundered it and attacked Spezia and Portovenere by land and sea, but they could not take them, although they laid waste the countryside. The Count of Modica and Nicolao Pichilino then sent me into Portovenere, and gave me four Genoese prisoners to ensure my good treatment. When I arrived at Portovenere, where I was known, I found a vessel and sailed in it for Leghorn, and entering the river of Pisa I arrived at the city. It is possible at high tide for galleys to reach the walls. Pisa was at one time very powerful and rich, and had many possessions, not only on the land, but among the islands, but now the Pisans are subjugated to the Florentines, whose masters they were.

Leaving Pisa I came to Florence, ten leagues from that place, travelling through a very fruitful country and by large villages which had, however, been much depopulated in the Pisan wars. Florence is a city both great and rich, and exceedingly beautiful within and without. It is situated in a plain with extensive suburbs on either side. A river runs through the centre which reaches to Pisa. But I will not write much of this city, as I shall speak of it later.[9]

From Florence I crossed the Alps to Pistoia, passing through many villages, and came to Bologna, where I found Pope Eugenius,[10] and here I was received with great honour by the Castilians who were there, by the

prelates as well as by the knights who bore me company when I craved licence from the Pope to go to Jerusalem. This he gave me readily with his blessing. He gave me also a Bull of plenary absolution at the hour of death. I remained there fifteen days, resting myself and watching the festivities with which both noblemen and citizens diverted themselves. It was the middle of winter, when the people are accustomed to amuse themselves and celebrate their weddings. The city accounts itself part of Lombardy. It is very large, well populated, and supplied with all the necessities of life, for which reason it is called Bologna the Fat. The houses and streets are most remarkable; the inns are excellent and the churches and monasteries very fine indeed. Among the latter is the monastery of St. Dominic the Preacher, where the body of the Saint is buried. This blessed one was a native of Castile of the lineage of Guzman on his father's side and of those of Aça on his mother's side, and the Master Don Luis de Guzman, being of the same lineage, sent to his majordomo, Pedro de Guzman, who was ambassador to the Pope and attached to the embassy of King Juan, desiring him to visit the place where St. Dominic was buried and to expend a certain sum of money there, which he gave him for the purpose, and he did so. I saw the chapel and grave, now very richly adorned, but formerly much neglected, and round about are sculptured and painted the arms of Guzman, which that good knight, Don Luis de Guzman, Master of Calatrava, had ordered to be set up. A small river runs through the city which improves it very much, and there are a hundred sluices with mills; some grind wheat, others spices, some scour arms, others make paper, saw wood, and spin silk, and in this manner they make use of the water. On one side of the city is a castle, the wall of which is made of sods of earth, which is very strong against shots from bombards.

Here is also one of the most famous universities in the world, where all sciences are studied, and students of all nationalities and great men are continually working there. The city belongs to the Church.

While at Bologna I sold my horses, and placed myself and my goods and people on board a boat, and travelled to Ferrara, all the way by that river of which I have spoken. It is very narrow so that only one boat can travel at a time, and if two boats meet one of them has to be hauled ashore. The river freezes each night, and the villagers have boats, the keels of which are shod with iron, and at night they go up and down the river, breaking the ice with poles which are pointed with iron, and thus they make a waterway for travellers. The children go about singing, "good sport," which is to say: "May there be a good frost." By this river we reached the Po, one of the greatest rivers in the world, and one of the four arms which descend from the German Alps, and travelling along the Po we came to the city of Ferrara.[11] I there presented myself to the Marquis, lord of the city, and remained three days. I then left by the river and came to Francolino, and continuing still by the river, I arrived at the place where it enters the sea which is one day's journey.

I reached Venice[12] at Vespers, leaving on the right hand and on the left many churches and monasteries and inns, all placed in the sea in the same way as Venice itself, and as soon as I had landed I went to see the church of St. Mark, which is on the water's edge, and worshipped there, after which we went to an inn called the *Sturgeon*,[13] a very notable hostelry, where we lodged the day and night following. The next day, after Mass, I enquired for the exchange of Messer Sylvestro Morosini, on whom I held bills. I found him speedily, and he accepted the bills and paid me the money. This is a matter in which nothing on earth will make them delay, for though all merchants

in every part of the world make use of bills of exchange they are more eager than any for fair dealing. I spent the day with him and with Carlo Morosini, a merchant who had been in Seville and had for a long time rented mines there. I had been great friends with him in the house of Master Don Luis, and therefore he received me very kindly and made me free of his house, where I resided all the time I was in Venice.

While there I enquired concerning my journey to Jerusalem, and learnt that it was not possible to set out for three months, as the pilgrim boats were not accustomed to leave until Ascension Day, which is in May. I desired to spend the intervening time in visiting the Christian world, including the courts of the Emperor and the King of France, but the merchants, my friends, with whom I took counsel, advised me to leave this until after my return from Jerusalem, and that in the meantime I should travel in Italy, which was well worth while, and as Lent was approaching I could spend it in Rome. I could then go on to Naples and see the King of Aragon, all which I could accomplish, and still have twenty days and more before my boat sailed. This seemed to me to be excellent counsel, and I followed it. I, therefore, set out to visit Italy, and saw many cities and towns, villages and fortresses until Lent, when I came to Rome. But Pope Eugenius was at Bologna, as I have said, having been driven out of Rome by a faction which had taken arms against him, intending to murder or capture him, and he escaped by boat by the Tiber and went to Pisa, and thence to Florence and Bologna.

CHAPTER III

Rome.—Pope Gregory and the Faithful.—The walls.—The Tiber.—Castle of St. Angelo.—The Vatican.—Old St. Peter's.—St. John Lateran.—Right of Sanctuary.—Sancta Sanctorum.—Statue of Marcus Aurelius.—The Colosseum.—Imperial buildings on the Palatine.—S. Maria Nuova.—S. Croce in Gerusalemme.—S. Silvestro in Capite.—S. Maria Rotonda.—Trajan's column.—Triumphal arches.—S. Maria in Ara Coeli.—S. Maria Maggiore.—S. Prassede.—S. Pietro in Vincoli.—S. Anastasio alle Tre Fontane.—The miserable condition of the city.—The inhabitants.—Wild beasts within the walls.

I STAYED at Rome[1] during the whole of Lent, visiting the sanctuaries and ancient buildings, which appeared to me to be very wonderfully made, but not only am I unable to describe them, but I doubt whether I could appreciate them as they deserved. Therefore I may be pardoned, such is the grandeur and magnificence of Rome, if I fall short in my account, for I am not equal to so great an undertaking in view of the extent to which these ancient buildings have been destroyed and changed, and are decayed. Nevertheless, to all who behold them it is clear that they were once very magnificent, in spite of the tumults which they witnessed after the beginning of the downfall of Rome, in the discords between the princes who were her citizens, the destruction wrought by powerful kings who fought against her, and the hand of time which consumes everything. Moreover, Pope St. Gregory, seeing how the faithful flocked to Rome for the salvation of their souls, but that they were so astounded at the magnificence of the ancient buildings that they spent much time in admiring them, and neglected the sacred object of their visit, the Pope, I say, sent orders to destroy all or the majority of the antiquities which had survived

from ancient times. The circuit of the city is very great, the walls being twenty-four miles round, that is eight of our leagues. They are so built, and of such height, that they appear to be fresh from the hand of the master-builder, and where they are broken down, there the tyrants entered the city from time to time, for the work is such that they defy wilful destruction. Small wonder, then, that they have survived, having been left as the ancients built them.

Through the middle of the city runs a river, which the Romans brought there with great labour and set in their midst, and this is the Tiber. They made a new bed for the river, so it is said, of lead, and channels at one and the other end of the city for its entrances and exits, both for watering horses and for other services convenient to the people, and anyone entering it at any other spot would be drowned. On either side of this river there are many mills which make the city all one [*sic*].

On one shore of the Tiber is a castle standing on a mound, which has been piled up so high that it has become a mountain, and it is fortified with a very high wall and many brave towers. It is called the Castle of St. Angelo. It stands above the bridge over the Tiber on the way to St. Peter's, where is the seat and place of the Apostles. They say that there was once a great plague in Rome which lasted for a long time, and it was revealed to Pope Gregory that he should go in procession to a church at one end of the city, called S. Agata in Suburra, where was an idol which was worshipped by the heathen, and even in secret by Christians, for some parts of the heathen rites had survived. As the Pope arrived in procession at the church and came to the idol, a noise like thunder burst from it and it fell in pieces. The Pope, beholding this marvel, made his procession, and as he was returning very devoutly to St. Peter's by the bridge below that

castle, an angel appeared in the sight of all with a drawn sword in his hand, all bloody, which sword he cleansed on his mantle and placed in its sheath. This was held to be a sign that God was appeased, and did not desire that more should die. In this manner was idolatry put down, and the castle from that day onwards was named the Castle of St. Angelo. It is so called to this day, and the figure of an angel is set up on it. It was in view of this miracle, and of other mighty and wonderful things which took place in Rome, that Pope Gregory, as I have related, destroyed many of the ancient buildings because they drew the attention of the pilgrims from the holy places, but he did not destroy all, and those who go there to-day, if they desire to see beautiful things, still seek them out before anything else.

The Pope has his dwelling adjoining the church of St. Peter on the slopes of the Aventine Hill. This is the place where formerly they used to secure the liberty of Rome (and in like manner they have now to secure the Faith, of which the Pope is constituted defender, against any heretics who desire to overthrow it), and here the Emperors remain several days before they are crowned, as if encamped against the Church's enemies. Afterwards they receive the crown of gold, with many ceremonies of which I cannot give an account. The Pope's dwelling is a mediocre place and when I was there it was ill-kept.

The church of St. Peter[2] is a notable church, the entrance is very magnificent, and one ascends to it by very high steps. The roof is richly worked in mosaic. Inside, the church is large, but very poor and in bad condition and dirty, and in many places in ruins. On the right hand is a pillar as high as a small tower, and in it is the holy Veronica. When it is to be exhibited an opening is made in the roof of the church and a wooden chest or cradle is let down, in which are two

clerics, and when they have descended, the chest or cradle is drawn up, and they, with the greatest reverence, take out the Veronica and show it to the people, who make concourse there upon the appointed day. It happens often that the worshippers are in danger of their lives, so many are they and so great is the press.

A little further on there are two large columns encased in wood, where they put those who are possessed by spirits, and from these pillars it was that Our Lord preached to the people in Jerusalem. In front of them is the rope with which Judas hanged himself, which is as thick as a man's arm or thicker. In the high altar are the bodies of St. Peter and St. Paul, and there is here a very great indulgence on a certain day, plenary both for sin and punishment. Here is also the chair in which St. Peter sat, and the Pope seats himself in it when he is elected. It is well, indeed, that strangers look on it with devotion, for it is neither rich nor kept with reverence.

There are many other sanctuaries in this church. On the other side of it is a high tower[3] made of one piece of stone, like a three-cornered diamond raised upon three brazen feet; and many, taking it for a holy thing, creep between the ground and the base of that tower. This was a work undertaken in honour of Julius Caesar and assigned for his burial, and on the top of it are three large gilt apples in which is the dust of the Emperor Julius Caesar, and certainly it is a noble edifice and marvellously ordered and very strange. It is called Caesar's needle, and in the middle and at the base, and even at the top, are a few ancient letters carved in the stone which now cannot well be read, but in fact they record that the body of Julius Caesar was buried there. And around this are many other edifices now much ruined.

The city of Rome is very sparsely populated considering its size. It is the opinion of many that now

that it is thrown down and depopulated, there issues from the ruins of the great buildings, and from the cellars and cisterns and houses, and from the deep vaults, now uninhabited, such poisonous air that it affects human bodies, and therefore it is said that Rome is unhealthy. But when it was well populated it was the contrary. Even now it seems that in the places where it is most closely inhabited the people find better health, as in Campo dei Fiori, which is a large district, and Campidoglio, another large district, and in the Ghetto, which is like a great village. But all the rest of the city is but thinly-scattered houses.

The first church established among Latin peoples was the church of St. John Lateran, from which the Holy Fathers draw their title and of which they are bishops. Both in it and around it there are very singular things to be seen. This church, so it is said, was the house in which Rome kept her treasure, and there is the Tarpeian Gate, which Caesar opened when he took out the treasure, and which until that hour had always been closed. When the Emperor Constantine was converted to the Catholic Faith and gave the patrimony of the Empire to the Church, and endowed it, he begged Pope Sylvester to issue a Bull in respect of that gate for the souls of those who should pass it, in like manner as previously the gate had been a place of sanctuary for those who took shelter there. For if one came as a fugitive and reached the Tarpeian Gate, whatsoever crime he had committed, he could not be taken thence, and this out of reverence for the treasure which lay therein. The Pope at first ordained that all who entered should be absolved from sin and punishment, but because many boldly committed sin with intent to be absolved by passing through the gate, the Pope ordered it to be closed, and to be opened once only every hundred years. Later, the period was reduced to fifty years, and now it is as the Pope is

pleased to ordain.[4] In this church are the heads of St. Peter and St. Paul, a very great relic and a great indulgence for sin and punishment when they are exhibited, in the same manner as the Veronica in the church of St. Peter.

Beside this church is a chapel apart, which they call Sancta Sanctorum. In it is a picture of Our Lord, showing Him from the girdle upwards, painted on a stone.[5] They say that Our Lady begged St. Luke, who was a famous painter, to paint this picture after the death of her Son, and he consented and painted it. It is, indeed, an object of the greatest devotion, and a very suitable remembrance of Him who had, and still has, power to do all things. It shows well the figure of Our Lord, His age and colour and all that He was, and there is a mole on the left cheek as an emblem of His humanity. It is the most revered object, and the greatest relic in Rome. Four men armed with iron maces guard it continually hour by hour, and on one day in the year, the feast of the Virgin, in the middle of August, they take out the relic, and protected by men-at-arms, and amidst much rejoicing, they carry it in procession and take it to the church of S. Maria Maggiore, where it rests that day and night, and the following day they return it to its place. There is plenary indulgence for all who are there at that time. No women are allowed to enter the chapel, for the reason, as they say, that a woman once uttered such things that she burst asunder. At the door of this chapel are two bells, said to be the first which were ever made in the world.

The election of the Pope takes place in the church of St. John Lateran, and here the various ceremonies are observed and he receives the triple crown. There are also many relics of St. Helena, mother of the Emperor Constantine, which were sent by him when he was in the Holy Land. The church is large, but

not rich nor well built, nor clean, nor richly adorned. Outside in a large square are many buildings and ancient memorials. Here is the statue of that Mucius[6] who caused the siege of Rome to be raised, and thinking to kill the king killed his favourite, for which he condemned himself, and suffered his right arm to be burnt. He is seated on a great horse of gilded brass, and both the figure and the horse are clearly the work of a master. Round about the square are many and diverse things, figures in stone, and marbles and stones with ancient inscriptions cut upon them.

Close by is the Colosseum which was, so they say, unmatched in the whole world for size and magnificence, and although most of it is in ruins the greatness and the marvel of its building may well be seen. It would take long to tell how the Romans kept this Colosseum, and with what reverence, and of the statue they had there[7], which was so great that its feet stood on the ground and its head reached to the highest point of the roof. The right arm was raised and held a large apple in the hand, which is now on the door of St. John Lateran. This, they say, was meant to signify that the whole world was in his hand, and from it is said to have been derived the custom of carrying an apple before the Emperors. They say, further, that this statue was once surrounded by figures of all the kings and princes in the world, each having a chain round the neck fastened to the feet of that great statue, and when it was known that any king or prince was rising against Rome, they threw down his image and issued decrees commanding war to be made upon him. However this may be, the Colosseum shows that it was once a very magnificent and sumptuous building.

Near at hand are the palaces of Octavian Augustus,[8] which, they say, he built and fortified because he was told by one of the Sibyls that when the Virgin should bring forth a child his statue would fall, and this was

upon the advent and birth of Our Lord, and his palace fell, and it is said that even now every year, on the day of the birth of Our Lord, some portion falls. Here there is a large mound like a hill, and it well appears that this mound was made by the fall of some very large edifice, and one can see many marbles, large stones, and other things which show well what it must have been. There is also a notable monastery of the Order of St. Bernard, which is called S. Maria Nuova.

There is in Rome a church, which they call S. Croce in Gerusalemme, where is preserved the title which was set up above Our Lord's Cross, which reads IHS NAZARENUS. All this church, with the floor and the walls and everything else, was made from earth of Jerusalem brought as ballast in ships, when St. Helena sent the holy relics to Rome, and here there is plenary indulgence for sin and punishment. There is also another church called S. Maria Rotonda,[9] which was formerly the place where the Roman people held their council. It is supported on great columns and is covered with lead, and one day in the year there is plenary indulgence. Another church belongs to certain nuns, where is the head of St. John the Baptist,[10] and there is also plenary indulgence on his feast-day. Close by is a great column made of a single stone, which was erected in memory of the Emperor Trajan, who came from Castile and was a native of Pedraza. He gave Rome its laws, which are used to this day by the Romans and by ourselves, as well in warfare as in the direction of public affairs. There are also three or four or more triumphal arches, which the Romans set up in honour of victorious men, among them one which was made for Julius Caesar, a very notable work.[11]

Another church is called S. Maria in Ara Coeli, beneath which is a large vaulted chamber, in which, at times, the Romans held their council, and where Julius Caesar was murdered by the hands of Cassius

and Brutus. Close by is the church of S. Maria Maggiore, where, on a certain day in the year, there is plenary indulgence, and at the door, in a great square, there is a column of porphyry, the worth of which cannot be estimated, and there are also many relics in this church. Adjoining is the church of S. Prassede, in which is the half of the column at which Christ was scourged, and there is also the body of the Blessed St. Jerome, on whose day there is plenary indulgence. The church where St. Peter was incarcerated is called S. Pietro in Vincoli, where is also plenary indulgence. Beyond the walls is the church where St. Peter and St. Paul were beheaded[12], in which are certain springs of very healing water, and here also there is plenary indulgence. Close by is the monastery of St. Paul, a very notable fraternity of the Order of Preachers, also with indulgence.

There are in this city many other things and sanctuaries, plenary indulgences, and wonderful buildings, which it would take long to describe. And since those who came with intent to visit the sacred places spent their time in admiring the ancient buildings and ruins, Pope Gregory ordered them, or the greater part of them, to be destroyed, so that the pilgrims should turn their minds from such matters to the holy places. He could not, however, completely destroy them, and it is apparent what these things, or some of them, must once have been. Here were the sepulchres of Romulus and Remus, the first builders of Rome, as well as many statues of men and women, placed there as a perpetual memorial of their deeds. Rome, which used to be the head of the world and is now the tail, has lost nothing in her ceremonies of what she was when she held the whole world in subjection, but such is now the miserable condition of the city that it is a shame to utter it. They say that in order not to forfeit their place as head of the world, which once they held, the citizens on a

certain day in the year make formal protest to the Pope, proclaiming that they are still ready to subdue the world as of old, that they have not lost their rights, but that the Pope has despoiled them of their own. This formal protest is made on Shrove Tuesday. Would to God that they were able to rule themselves, and were not, as the Italians say of them, a worthless people, given over to every vice and abused by all.

I found no one in Rome who could give me any account of those ancient things concerning which I enquired, but they could, without doubt, have informed me fully as to the taverns and places of ill-fame. It is said that the people never dine in their houses even by a miracle, and, indeed, their dress and bearing, both indoors and out, show clearly what they are. I say this of the majority, for doubtless in such a multitude there must be some who are virtuous. It is said, further, that Rome, though depopulated, has more inhabitants than any Christian city in the world, but there are parts within the walls which look like thick woods, and wild beasts, hares, foxes, wolves, deer and even, so it is said, porcupines breed in the caves.

There are two statues[13] in Rome, and it is related of them that once there was a dispute between the plebeians and the nobles, the former demanding to know why, since they were all sons of one father, namely Adam, and consequently having Eve for mother, the nobles should take precedence of them. And the plebeians said in a sculptured inscription: *Cum pater Adam nobis sit, mater Eva, cur igitur non sumus nobilitate pares?* The nobles thereupon made answer: *Degenerant omnes viciis, fiuntque minores, exaltat virtus, nobilitantque mores.* Therefore, it is said, the nobles have greater jurisdiction, and, moreover, that this was the reason why the law was made that no plebeian nor woman could hold the office of consul, which law was broken later when Gaius Marius, according to Sallust, was proposed in the Senate.

CHAPTER IV

Rome to Viterbo.—Perugia.—Assisi.—Gubbio.—Meeting with Count of Urbino.—Rimini.—Ravenna.—Venice.—Arrangements for the voyage.

I DEPARTED from Rome and came to Viterbo, a very pleasant city, where there are warm water baths, which are said to be sovereign against all infirmities, and they say that on the request of his private physician, the Pope sent orders to destroy them, and it is not known now what manner of diseases they cured, but it is believed that some little time since they were found to cure dropsy. The holy body of St. Rose is here. We left Viterbo and passed certain cities called Narni, Terni and Spoleto, and arrived finally at Perugia, a famous city, where was born Bracchio,[1] that great captain, and Sforza, father of the present Duke of Milan. All this country is so thickly inhabited that cities, towns and castles seem all joined together. I left Perugia for Assisi, where St. Francis and St. Clare were born, and where their bodies now lie. It is a notable city. In it are eight or ten monasteries, both for men and women, of the Order of the blessed St. Francis, the principal monastery being in the chief square. I went to lodge in it, having found there a servant of our Cardinal of Castile who was a great friend of mine, and I remained three days resting myself. They say that the body of St. Francis is buried there in a place which they show, but the truth is that no one knows the exact spot, not even those in the monastery, except the Pope, one cardinal, and a brother of the monastery, to whom the Pope confides the secret. The monastery is very notable and very richly adorned.

Departing thence I set out for Gubbio which belongs

to the Count of Urbino of the House of Malatesta,[2] but by the way I came upon armed troops placed there by Count Francesco, who at that time was making war on the Pope and had occupied many places, and I was advised to send my horses from Assisi with a man well known there who was going to see the Count, and that I should be wise to go on foot, which I accordingly did, and after walking for two days and a half I reached Gubbio, a great city belonging to the Count. I found then that the Count was going forth on foot in procession to greet the Cardinal of Colonna, his wife's brother, and nephew of Pope Martin, and I saw him coming, surrounded by clerics and singing with them, and thus they met the Cardinal and received him most honourably. I presented myself to the Count and made my reverence, and begged him, for the love of God, to assist me, as I was a poor man who had come from Rome and was going to Jerusalem; but my men remained behind, as I had told them not to come with me. The Count took me aside, but first he asked me whence I came. I said: "From Spain." He then enquired if I was of gentle birth, and I said, "Yes": whether I was a knight, and I said, "Yes." He then desired to be informed how I had come and of what I had need. I informed him of my coming, and that I had arrived on foot, further, that I had need of nothing as I had sufficient for my journey, but that I had come in this guise in order to see him and have speech with him Thereupon he embraced me closely and said: "Even against your will you shall be assisted here to the best of my ability," but I replied that I could under no circumstances accept anything so long as I had what was needful, for so I had resolved before departing from my country. He made me, however, remain there two days to rest and enjoy myself, after which he called a squire and ordered him to accompany me through his dominions as far as Rimini, which is

a port and a possession of his, and that he was to bear all my expenses. Further, that at Rimini he was to provide me with a ship and with all necessaries for my journey to Venice. At parting the Count took me by the hand and led me to his room and told me to take whatever I had need of, and he gave me of his own shirts and woollen garments and towels, of each three pairs, and was much distressed because I did not want to accept anything else, and he said farewell to me very humanly as if we had been equals. He charged me much to remember him in my prayers and to come and visit him on my return. But this good Count is now dead, and they say that he died very piously and has been canonized as a saint.

In Gubbio there are many relics, among them the finger of the right hand of John the Baptist, with which he pointed when he said: *ecce agnus Dei.* I departed with that squire and came to Urbino, which belongs to the Count, and remained there a day, after which, in two days, we arrived at Rimini, a great city, also the Count's, and I stayed there two days. The squire prepared a boat for me and victualled it, and paid all charges as far as Venice, and as I parted from him he said: "Sir knight, the Count, my Master, ordered me to give you a hundred ducats: see, here they are." I bade him thank the Count greatly for his kindness and liberality, but said that I had sufficient for my needs, and that on my homeward journey, if I was in difficulties, I should certainly crave assistance from him, and that I should shortly return. I begged him, further, to kiss the Count's hands for me, and thus we parted.

I now embarked on board my ship, and we set sail and arrived the following day at Ravenna, a very ancient place and large, although not well populated. There we found a good wind, and at Vespers we reached Venice, where I was well received by my friends the merchants, and found the money I had left

there at my departure in good hands. I took up my quarters in the house of my friend Carlo Morosini, and spent thirty days or more there until Ascension Day, which falls in May, the month when the ships, especially the pilgrims' galleys, have leave to depart.[3] During the intervening time I made my contract with the galley-master, as the custom is, for my passage and provisions, with a supply of preserves for morning, afternoon and evening, the cost for the outward and return journey being thirty-five ducats for each person. But since I proposed to stay at Jerusalem, I paid for myself and my two squires the sum of sixty ducats, that is twenty ducats for each of us. I passed my time at Venice very pleasantly and restfully, at small expense, and each day I went about seeing many remarkable and delightful things. Every hour there came news from all countries of the world, for the sea-borne traffic is very great, and ships are continually arriving from all parts, and if one desires to have news of any place it is only necessary to enquire of the ships.

CHAPTER V

Departure from Venice.—Parenzo.—Zara.—Ragusa.—Corfu.—Gulf of Patras.—Isthmus of Corinth.—A monastery of Greek monks.—Modone.—Island of Cythera.—Crete.—Rhodes.—The Knights Hospitallers.—Arrival at Jaffa.

On Ascension Day, after receiving the blessing, we departed and set sail at noon, and took the left side of the gulf towards Esclavonia [Dalmatia], the greater part of which is Venetian, and all along the coast there are many safe harbours and islands and ports for taking in provisions. The next day we came to a town called Parenzo, and from there we sailed for Zara, a town of the Venetians. Thence we reached Ragusa which is under the dominion of the Emperor. All this time we kept passing islands belonging to Esclavonia, some populated and some uninhabited. The country is very mountainous and bare; and the inhabitants are the tallest I have ever seen, but what a barbarous people they are! In these parts are bred the best falcons in the world, except the Norwegian, and it is said that silver is to be found in many places.

We continued our voyage along the Gulf, passing Valona, a large city, which had recently fallen into the hands of the Turks, and then, leaving Esclavonia, we sailed by Albania, which is part of the same coast, and left Italy and the Cape of Spartivento on the right hand. The Gulf of Venice runs for 800 miles between Italy and Esclavonia, and at the end of it is the island of Corfu, which the Venetians call their door, although Venice is in fact 800 miles away. On the right hand is that part of Italy called Apulia and the Tierra di Lavoro, and, on the left, Esclavonia, formerly called Dalmatia, and a great part of Albania. The island of Corfu is

inhabited by Greeks. Not long ago King Ladislaus of Naples[1] took it and held it with the intention of capturing Jerusalem, of which he called himself king, and it is said that in his necessity he sold the island to the Venetians who now possess it. We remained there two days, waiting for a favourable wind, and on the third day we departed, sailing for Modone, which is in Greece. This day we passed the Gulf of Patras on the left hand, and much enjoyed the sight of it. Here the city of Corinth is situated, a very ancient place with magnificent buildings, now much depopulated. This gulf strikes inland, and with the other gulf which enters from the other side it forms the peninsula of Morea, which in ancient times was called Achaia. It is governed by the Emperor of Constantinople, and is the patrimony of the eldest son whom they call Despot of Morea. These two gulfs eat so far into the land that they say there is not a space of two miles between them. An Emperor of Constantinople once wished to make the peninsula into an island, but he changed his mind on the advice of his counsellors. Nevertheless, he enclosed it with a very strong wall which can be seen to this day.

On the fourth day we came in sight of the city of Modone. Six miles before we reached it we passed a small island, on which is a notable monastery of Greek brothers of St. Basil, whom the Latins call monks, and since the wind had dropped, and I desired to see the monastery, I asked the master to put me ashore, and I carried some fish with me, since by their rules the monks are never allowed to eat meat. They received us very joyfully and showed us their house, and soon afterwards we departed. The inhabitants of the island told us that the monks live a very holy life there. The monastery is called Stanphane.[2] That day we arrived at Modone[3], which lies between that island and the island of Sapienza, and there we

cast anchor and landed in order to provision the ship, and to enable the master and the passengers to transact certain business there, for they were Venetians and the place belongs to Venice. There are 2000 inhabitants, and the sea encloses it on both sides. It is well walled and sufficiently strong, but flat. I saw there numerous gardens supplied with all kinds of fruit, and the soil is very productive, like that of Andalucia. Lodging is good, the language is Greek, but the place is governed from Venice. Six miles away is Corone, which lies in the other gulf of which I spoke. It is a large town and a powerful fortress. Here also Greek is spoken, and it is likewise under the seigniory of Venice. The Venetians have these possessions in Morea because they are vital for their trade. The people are very wealthy, for these places are the ports of discharge for Greece and the Black Sea for all classes of merchandise. We remained there six days. Then we sailed towards Candia, which was anciently called Creta, where once King Agamemnon reigned, who led the Greeks against the Trojans. We left the Archipelago on the left, which is full of islands both populated and uninhabited, and among them I saw the island of Cythera, which the Greeks call Cetril. Here it was that Paris seized Helen and carried her off to Troy. I saw also a mighty rock which is very smooth, but which rises to a great height. In the midst of it is a cave, two hundred fathoms high and more than that in depth.[4]

From Modone to the island of Crete the distance is 350 miles, which we compassed in two days and two nights, after which we arrived at the harbour of Candia, and because the Latins of Crete know only the city of Candia they call the whole kingdom by that name. The island[5] is very fertile and well supplied with excellent towns and fortresses. The language is Greek, and the government is from Venice. Each

year a Duke is sent as governor, and since, not long ago, the islanders rose against the Venetians, who had to send and recapture the place, an ordinance was issued that in a certain part of the island nothing should be sown, nor should the cattle be allowed to multiply. This was done to decrease the prosperity of the people, since everything is so abundant there. The city of Candia is very large, with many great buildings. They say that three miles away is that Labyrinth, made by Daedalus, with many other antiquities. The city is well built, with beautiful gardens and much water. The harbour is remarkable, with an excellent mole made artificially. There are also many wind-mills. At a certain period of the year such multitudes of falcons pass over the island that they can hardly find anyone to buy them. We remained there three days, and then sailed for Rhodes, leaving the Archipelago and numerous islands on the left hand. The distance from Candia to Rhodes is 300 miles. On the third day we reached the island, and found there certain galleys and ships belonging to the King of Aragon, but we armed ourselves and displayed our pennons for Jerusalem, and when they saw these they left us at once and sailed away.

The city of Rhodes is flat, but fortified with a moat and wall, and on one side is a place apart where the Knights Hospitallers of Jerusalem[6] have their residence, which is called the Collachium, and in it is the Hospital from which they take their name. It is one of the most magnificent houses of piety which I have ever seen, and, indeed, in the matter of building and embellishments and supplies it could not be improved. The Knights receive anyone who is sick, and a patient dying there is absolved from sin and punishment, and even for those who visit the Hospital there are certain indulgences. This Hospital is situated just as one enters the Collachium on the left hand, and it was built by

Don Anton de Fluvian, Grand Master of the Knights, who was a Catalan by birth. From there we went to see the city, passing many streets and houses of the Knights, among them certain hostels where foreigners eat and have their places of meeting, each nation apart from the others, and a Knight has charge of each one of these hostels, and provides for the necessities of the inmates according to their religion. At the end of the Knights' quarter, on the left hand, is the church of St. John, to which they constantly resort to say their office, and where they hold their council. In this church there are many relics, including, so they say, the basin in which Our Lord washed His hands, and a large share of the money for which He was sold, some of the thorns, a nail of the Cross, and many others, and when they elect the Grand Master, the Knights swear on these relics that, truly and without favour, they will elect the one most worthy to hold that office. In front of this church is the house of the Grand Master, an ordinary dwelling and not rich. There the Master is attended by twelve Knights, called companions, who take counsel with him and eat always at his board.

Every day throughout the year the Knights have to give food to twelve poor people and serve them with their own hands, except when they are occupied with the sick or are absent. There is another hostel which is for the reception of pilgrims for Jerusalem, and here they lodge every one according to his station, and everything is provided except food. There is also a church where certain chaplains are charged with the duty of saying Mass for the pilgrims, and all this is done to keep them from the common inns. The Knights visit them there, and anyone who desires to take a guest with him may do so with leave of the Marshal. The island of Rhodes is reasonably well supplied with bread and wine, and with gardens.

Most of the gardens are for the service of the Master's table, and he portions them out among the twelve companions who are with him. There is also a fortress in the island called Judigo. Much might be related of this noble company of Knights, but I leave them now to speak of other things.

We departed from Rhodes and sailed past Castelrosso, an island off the coast of Armenia, a very strong fortress belonging to the Knights, and taking the route to Cyprus, we coasted by Turkey where the great Turkish lords have their habitations, the Caraman, the lord of Candelor, the lord of Satalia, and other powerful rulers. There they showed us a city which is said to have been destroyed for the crime of sodomy. We sailed then for three days along the Gulf of Satalia and reached the island of Cyprus, passing over against a city called Paphos, now uninhabited by reason of bad air and water, and since it is not the custom for the pilgrims for Jerusalem to disembark in the island on the outward journey, I am unable in this place to relate more concerning it, but later I will speak of it. So continuing our voyage to Jaffa, which is the port of Jerusalem, from point to point a distance of 350 miles, we sailed for three days and nights, and on the fourth day we came to the coast of the Holy Land, but since the whole of that country is very flat the entrance to Jaffa cannot be seen.

CHAPTER VI

The landing at Jaffa.—Jerusalem.—The Holy Sepulchre.—The holy places.—Bethlehem.—Return to Jerusalem.—Jericho.—The Jordan.—The pilgrims bathe and one is drowned.—Visit to Dead Sea.—Mount Quarantana.—A French squire falls off the mountain.—Trouble with an official.—Judgment and execution.—Bethany.—Mount Tabor.—Tafur penetrates into the Mosque of Omar.—Second visit to the Holy Sepulchre.—Three pilgrims dubbed knights.

When the pilgrim ship arrives at Jaffa the fact is known almost at once to the Prior of Mount Sion, who sends two or three friars to the Governor of Jerusalem who return with the Sultan's safe-conduct.[1] They take the pilgrims ashore and deliver their names in writing to the Governor, and they themselves retain another list, and in this manner all fear of imposture is avoided. As one disembarks, there are Moors ready with asses which the pilgrims ride all the time that they are in the Holy Land. Two ducats is the price fixed for the hire, and this cannot be increased or diminished. The Governor and the friars travel with the pilgrims to Rama, a great place, five leagues from Jaffa, where there is a hostel founded for pilgrims by Duke Godfrey of Bouillon when he took the Holy Sepulchre. It is well provided with many apartments, some for men and some for women, and we remained there one day. The next morning we travelled two miles to the monastery of St. George, where his body is said to lie, and where he is believed to have slain the dragon, but others say that he slew it at Beyrout which is the port of Damascus. That day we slept at a place five leagues from there, close to a castle called Emmaus, and the following day we left early and travelled another five leagues to the city of Jerusalem, of which we obtained a good prospect some four

leagues off. We could see a number of buildings, as well as Mount Sion, and the castles of King David, and the Holy Sepulchre which is a very lofty church.

As we entered Jerusalem the Christians, both Greeks and other nations, came out to receive us and carried us to a great square in front of the Holy Sepulchre where we prayed, but they did not let us go in. They then took us to a hostel, likewise founded by Duke Godfrey of Bouillon, where we found an abundance of food cooked in various ways, which the Greeks make ready and sell to the Christians. Not long after, the Prior of Mount Sion came with his friars, bringing with them ten or twelve knights who are accustomed to live in the monastery, and we were very comfortably lodged. The Prior left two friars who were to accompany us from that day onwards and show us the sights in Jerusalem and the vicinity. This monastery of Mount Sion is situated on one side of the city on the highest point, and in it are many places where Our Lord worked great miracles. There is also a lofty tower in the vault of which, when the disciples were gathered together, Our Lord appeared to them in tongues of fire—this was the Feast of Pentecost. From here one can see the sea of Sodom and Gomorrah, which they call the Dead Sea, where once were five cities. Beneath this tower is also a chapel where Our Lord appeared to St. Thomas the Apostle and told him to put his hand into His side, and many other things also happened in this place. At the entrance, in the centre of a street, is the house of the Virgin Mary, and close to it, behind the monastery, is the place where Our Lord partook of the Last Supper with His disciples. This day we rested there, and the next day we heard Mass in the Holy Sepulchre, which is only open once a year, and there they took count of us according to the list which they made at Jaffa.

Each pilgrim paid seven ducats and a half, and with the two paid for the beasts, and certain payments made in small coin in the holy places—eleven of these coins being worth a ducat—each pilgrim paid twelve and a half ducats as tolls.

As we were preparing to enter the Holy Sepulchre, there came out to meet us in procession all those Christians who had been locked up there since the year before,[2] that is to say the Catholics (three Franciscan friars), the Greeks, the Jacobite Christians, the Armenians, those of Cinturia, India and the Copts, in all seven different kinds of Christians, and we joined the procession and went into the Holy Sepulchre. This is a great church, exceeding lofty, with an immense opening through which the light enters. Within is another smaller chapel, in which is the Holy Sepulchre itself, and this is so small that there is no room in it, except for the priest who says Mass and the server. After worshipping there we went with the procession to Mount Calvary, where Our Lord was crucified, which is twelve or fifteen paces from that place. This is a great rock upon which stands a chapel, most richly ornamented with mosaic work. The hole in which the Cross was placed is still to be seen, as well as the holes where the crosses of the two thieves stood. After praying there, we descended to the place where Christ was anointed, and thence to the room where He was detained before the crucifixion. Afterwards we saw the place where St. Helena found the Cross, as well as the spot which Our Lord indicated as the centre of the world. Adjoining is the dwelling of the friars, where the relics are kept, and where Our Lord appeared to St. Mary Magdalene as a gardener. At the entrance is a great hall hung with pennons and flags of many kings and Christian princes, and here the knights set up their arms. All these things and many more are to be seen on the way in from this cemetery, and all the holy

THE HOLY SEPULCHRE
From a Book of Hours (before 1480)

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relics are there, and each one of the aforesaid Christians has a separate chapel.

We left the procession and heard Mass, and then had dinner, which the Greeks had prepared for us very well for our money. That day the Moors and Christians had licence to display goods for us to buy, and we rested a day and night, hearing divine offices, each one in the manner of his country. Here is the tomb of Godfrey de Bouillon, with an inscription engraved on a stone as follows.[3] [It is missing.] Close to this is the tomb of Baldwin, his brother, made in the same manner, with this inscription. [It is missing.] The following day, when we had heard Mass, they opened the doors and let us out after counting us, and sent us to our hostel. That day we saw the Campo Santo and the Valley of Jehoshaphat, where is the sepulchre of the Virgin Mary, which is an underground vault reached by fifteen or twenty steps. The Franciscans are the guardians. Here we paid certain moneys. From there we went to the place where Our Lord was taken in the garden, and afterwards to the Mount of Olives, where Christ ascended to Heaven. There is a notable church here, with a stone with the imprint of His foot upon it. We saw also the place where the disciples, being gathered together, composed the Creed, and from there we continued to the spot where Christ uttered the Pater Noster. Close by is the elder-tree where Judas hanged himself. Then, as we returned to Jerusalem, we passed the place where the wood of the Cross was kept for a long time, and not far off is the site of the stoning of St. Stephen. We entered the city close by the Golden Gate, which adjoins the Temple of Solomon, and passed the pool where the Angel troubled the waters, and the sick were healed. Then we saw the Houses of Pilate and Caiaphas where Christ was judged. Here they still sentence people to death. We saw also the street

called Amargura, where Our Lord carried the Cross on His shoulders, which is a covered way. Here the rain water is collected and stored in cisterns from which the people drink, for the city is badly supplied with water. This day we slept at our hostel.

The next day we departed early from Jerusalem with the Governor and the friars, and set out for Bethlehem, five leagues from there, where on the way they showed us a chapel which marks the spot where the Star appeared to the Three Kings, and a league further on we came to the house of the prophet Elijah. At noon we arrived at Bethlehem, a small town with some fifty inhabitants. There the Moors vied with us in showing reverence, and we entered the monastery which is very notable and wealthy, with fine buildings. Six friars live here continually, and they came out in procession to receive us, and took us at once to a chapel underground where Our Lord was born, and close to it is the crib, and at the going out is the place where Christ was circumcised. Then we saw the vaults where the Innocents are buried, and in these vaults is the place where St. Jerome translated the Bible, and here we rested that day and paid fees. The following day, after Mass, we departed for the place where St. John the Baptist was born, a distance of five leagues. Here lived St. Zachariah, and here he wrote the psalm *Benedictus Dominus Deus Israel.* In this place there are many holy things. We remained at Bethlehem all that day, and the next day we returned to Jerusalem, which is three leagues distant, where we arrived very early. We spent the day visiting certain sanctuaries in Jerusalem: the house of St. Anna, the house where St. Peter denied Our Lord (here is also the stone with which the sepulchre was closed); the houses of St. James, the Greater and the Less, and the grave of Absalom which is situated outside the city. It is related that within the last few days, as some Moors

were seeking treasure there, a cry was heard and they were brought out dead. We saw also a fountain which they say Our Lady, the Virgin, caused to spring forth, as well as the place where Our Lord fell when carrying the Cross, the castles of King David, the place where Christ washed the disciples' feet, and many other holy places.

We rested for a day, and then set forth early from Jerusalem with the Governor and the friars, and dined two leagues from there at the castle and place called Madalon, which was the inheritance of Mary Magdalene. There is a notable church here, as well as the place where Our Lord raised Lazarus from the dead, and other holy sites. Here we paid fees. In the evening we departed and came to a place which belonged to Martha, the sister of Mary Magdalene, and slept that night at a house in a mountain where Our Lord healed the sick which were brought to Him. The next morning we came to Jericho, which is fifteen leagues from Jerusalem. There is here a great valley, and a vast plain through which the river Jordan flows to the place where Our Lord baptized St. John the Baptist, and was baptized of him. A stone cross in the water marks the spot. Here we all bathed, and a German gentleman belonging to our party perished by drowning. This is a place of the greatest sanctity.

The pilgrims had to return that night to sleep at Jericho and to go the next day to Quarantana, where Our Lord fasted. But I arranged with a Moor to take me to the desert of Arabia, three leagues farther on, where St. John preached, and where the first hermit, St. Anthony, as well as other Holy Fathers, retired to live, and from there I returned by the Dead Sea, where were Sodom and Gomorrah and three other cities, five cities in all, which were overthrown for the sin of sodomy. The water is so foul that it cannot be described, and they say that no fish can breed there and

that no birds frequent the place. The Moor who travelled with me told me a great marvel: that the river Jordan enters the lake and emerges at the other side without mixing with the fetid waters, and that in the midst of the lake one can drink of the sweet water of the river. All about this valley there are certain tall and very straight trees, much burdened with a fruit like citrons, and if one touches them with the fingers, however lightly, they break and a smoke comes out, and the evil smell remains on the hand all that day.[4]

The following day I returned and dined at Jericho, which is a village with about a hundred inhabitants, and there I gathered some of those roses which are beneficial to women in labour, and saw many holy places associated with Our Lord. At the head of that river is the province called Bethany-trans-Jordan. That night I slept at the mountain where Our Lord fasted where I again joined the pilgrims. This is a very high mountain range in the centre of which are some small chapels, and there is a road for the ascent, made by St. Helena to do honour to the place. But as we were ascending, a squire of France, going to the assistance of a lady, fell headlong from the mountain and was dashed in pieces on the rocks below, for the place is very perilous to climb. We then descended, and by another and easier route we reached the very summit where Our Lord was tempted of the devil. We then returned and came to a fountain where the people from Jericho had brought food to sell to us. We remained there that night, and the next morning we took up the corpse of that squire and carried it to the before-mentioned house on the mountain, and there we buried it, after which we remained there that day.

The next morning we returned to the castle of Madalon, but the Governor remained behind as he was going hunting. He commended us, however, to one

of his knights, who accompanied us to the church where Lazarus was raised from the dead. The officer there demanded tribute, but the Moor who was with us refused to pay, saying that it was not customary, and the quarrel grew so heated that the officer and his men took up arms against the knight who had charge of us and wounded him. But we went to his assistance and attacked and wounded many of the Moors, and finally we captured the officer and his fellows and carried them before the Governor, who meanwhile had drawn near. The Governor at once held his enquiry and pronounced sentence of death on the officer, whose head was cut off without more ado, while the other prisoners were ordered to be flogged. We remained there until evening, and then returned to sleep at Jerusalem. The next day we departed with the same knight and came to Bethany, where they showed us many holy places, including Mount Tabor, where Our Lord was transfigured, and it is said that here also is the Vale of Hebron, where are the graves of Adam and Eve. We returned that night to Jerusalem, passing several holy places, among them the garden where Our Lord prayed and was taken, and we reached the city early.

That night I bargained with a renegade, a native of Portugal, and offered him two ducats if he would get me into the Temple of Solomon,[5] and he consented. At one o'clock in the night I entered, dressed in his clothes, and saw the Temple which is a single nave, the whole ornamented with gold mosaic work. The floor and walls are of the most beautiful white stones, and the place is hung with so many lamps that they all seemed to be joined together. The roof above is quite flat and is covered with lead. They say, in truth, that when Solomon built it, it was the most magnificent building in the whole world. Afterwards it was destroyed and rebuilt, but to-day, without doubt, it

is still unmatched. If I had been recognized there as a Christian I should have been killed immediately. Not long ago this Temple was a consecrated church, but a favourite of the Sultan prevailed on him to take it and turn it into a mosque. The renegade who had escorted me now returned with me to Mount Sion where the friars mourned for me as one already dead, since I had not come at the appointed time, and they rejoiced greatly to see me again, as did also the gentlemen of my company.

We had ordained to go the next day to hear Mass and to remain a day and night in the Holy Sepulchre. Accordingly, we arrived at daybreak, and they opened the doors with the same ceremonies as before. That day we confessed and received the Sacrament, and I dubbed three gentlemen Knights of the Holy Sepulchre, two Germans and a Frenchman,[6] and we placed our arms in the accustomed place and took some of the relics which the guardian gave us, and the next day at dawn we heard Mass and departed. We spent the whole of this day and the next in visiting holy places and in preparation for our departure. I had been enquiring as to the possibility of visiting St. Catherine's monastery on Mount Sinai, which is close to the Red Sea, but learnt that the escort with the camels had already departed with an ambassador from Turkey to the Sultan at Babylonia, so that my journey could not be undertaken. I was willing to remain there until next year, if needs be, but the guardian advised me to go to Cyprus to see the Cardinal, brother of the old King, stating that he would give me a safe-conduct for Babylonia and that I could reach Mount Sinai from there, and I decided to do this.

CHAPTER VII

Departure for Cyprus.—Rama.—Jaffa.—Beyrout.—Colchis.—Cyprus.—Nicosia.—Mosen Suarez and the late King's captivity.—Tafur is appointed ambassador to the Sultan of Egypt.

The next day we departed with the Governor and the friars and slept at Rama. The following day we reached the port of Jaffa, where we found the galleys awaiting us, and we went on board, and the Moors and friars returned to Jerusalem while we set sail for Beyrout. This day the Governor Naçardin came to me and related what befell the King of Denmark, and so we arrived at the port of Damascus. We passed along the coast by Tyre, Ascalon and Acre, where is a castle to which the Knights of St. John withdrew when they lost Jerusalem. Close by is Nazareth, where Our Lady was saluted, which is in Galilee, and so we arrived at Beyrout. Here the patrons of the galleys took in merchandise, and I desired to see Damascus, but they could not stay for me. From here I saw Mount Lebanon, where all the trees are cedars, but they looked like laurels. Here, in Beyrout, they say that St. George slew the dragon, and now they find these creatures in the fields under the stones, like scorpions, and they grow no larger and have no poison. This, they say, is due to the prayers of the blessed St. George. I gathered much information concerning Damascus, but since I did not see the place I pass it over and leave it to those that have been there. We departed from Beyrout by the coast of Syria as far as Armenia, where of old Antioch is said to have stood, and they showed it to us. Then, proceeding along the coast, we saw the castle of Colchis where Medea lived, and the island of the Golden Fleece. This castle

belongs to the Kings of Cyprus, wherefore they call themselves Kings of Armenia. In this part of Armenia there is a high mountain range called the Black Mountain, and here, they say, Noah's ark rested after the Flood.

Over against this castle is the island of Cyprus, and in that part which faces Armenia is the ancient city of Famagusta, which the Genoese captured when they took the King of Cyprus and carried him to Genoa with his wife,[1] and there the Queen gave birth to a son whom they called Janus, who was the father of the present king. The place is depopulated on account of bad air and water. They say that there is a lake here called Gostanca which is the cause of the ill-health. Nevertheless, the Kingdom of Cyprus is for the most part unhealthy. We arrived at daybreak and anchored to take in cargo, and I bade farewell to the ship's master and to my friends, and had my goods put on shore. I caused enquiries to be made for beasts for me and my people and goods, and I departed forthwith and took the road for Nicosia, which is ten leagues away. This is the chief city of the Kingdom and the most healthy, and here the Kings are accustomed to hold their court, and the lords of the Kingdom have their dwellings there. Since it was already late I had to stay at an inn, two leagues from the city. As I was going along I was seized with such terrible pains in my head that I thought I was about to die. The pain descended to my legs and attacked the stomach, the belly, hips, thighs and the knees down to the feet, and it lasted all that night and the following day until Vespers. I could not but think that if each separate pain was to endure for three hours I should certainly die.

That night I departed and came to the city of Nicosia where the King then was, and I lodged at an inn. The next morning, as I was hearing Mass in the church of

St. George, a squire approached me from the Lady Ines,[2] sister of the late King Janus, she having sent him to summon me to her presence. And after Mass I went with the squire to the palace of that lady and made my reverence, and she received me very graciously, desiring to know who I was and whence I came and whither I was going. After much speech with me she gave directions that I should take up my lodging in her house, and ordered all things necessary to be prepared for me and mine. This lady was very noble, but unmarried, having in youth resolved to remain a virgin, and she was continually in the King's council, and by her influence controlled most of the affairs in the Kingdom, and she was about fifty years of age. After I had rested she conducted me the next day to the King, her nephew,[3] and to the Cardinal, her brother. I then made my reverence to both, and they received me very graciously, and I related to them the reason for my journey, stating that in the first place I had come there to visit the King and his court, and secondly to obtain a safe-conduct for my journey to Babylonia and Mount Sinai. I showed them my letters from King Juan, recommending me to the Cardinal of Cyprus who at that time was in Italy, but now I found him here, and he promised to help me in what ways he could. There was present at this interview Mosen Suarez, admiral of Cyprus, and he approached me with great friendliness, saying that he was a Castilian, as I was, and he craved leave of the King and the Cardinal and the Lady Ines to take me as his guest, and the Lady Ines made objection, but finally she consented, and I went with him to his house.

This knight was born in Segovia, of the family of Çernadilla, and being young and on his travels, he came to Cyprus on the very day on which the late King was fighting with the Sultan's forces, and he carried himself so valiantly in battle that he saved the King's life,

but he was taken prisoner with him and carried to Babylonia.[4] There is a custom among the Moors that none may ride on horseback who is not a renegade Christian, and that day, as they entered Babylonia, the King being a captive, they brought two horses, one for the King and one for Mosen Suarez,[5] and when they were come into the presence of the Sultan he gave orders, having heard the truth of the affair, that Mosen Suarez should be honoured equally with the King. After some days, when they were speaking of the King's ransom, the Sultan told Mosen Suarez that if he wished to further the release of the King, he would set him free on his word that he would go and return with the ransom, or at least come back himself. Mosen Suarez promised accordingly, and the Sultan ordered that everything should be prepared for him, and when asked in what guise he would go, he replied that he would travel as a Syrian. Thereupon the Sultan fitted him out and gave him licence, and he departed and came to Cyprus, and after taking counsel with the Cardinal and the Lady Ines, and their advisers, it was ordained to send certain knights to the kings and princes of Christendom to seek their aid in ransoming the King (I saw there the knight who was sent to Castile, who was called Jacobo Guiri), and the lot fell upon this same Mosen Suarez to go to Rome to the Pope. In due time each returned from his mission, bringing back what he could, and the necessary guarantees having been obtained, Mosen Suarez, with the others of the Council, took a sum of gold, which was 300,000 ducats, and set out with it to the King.

As soon as they were come to Babylonia the Sultan heard of it, and sent orders to go out and receive them, and he showed Mosen Suarez as much honour as if he had been his own son. The release of the King was secured in this wise: the Sultan took the gold, and in addition the King of Cyprus obliged himself to send

each year 8000 ducats, and so the matter was concluded. The Sultan gave orders to prepare the necessary things and the ships to carry the King to his country. Moreover, the King showed much favour to Mosen Suarez and also to the Sultan's chief interpreter, a native of Castile who was a Jew of Seville and a renegade, for services rendered to him in his prison, and each year the present King sends him 200 ducats. When the King returned to his Kingdom and conferred with his lords, he took Mosen Suarez by the hand and made him sit down at his side, and said that if he had no legitimate son he would bequeath the Kingdom to him. The King also sent for one of his bastard daughters who was there, and married Mosen Suarez to her, and made him his admiral and his heir.

After I had passed four or five days in the house of the admiral Mosen Suarez, the Cardinal sent for me and told me that I was to go to hear Mass with the King, and that he would give me occasion for my journey to Babylonia, and that I was to dine with him. After Mass the King went apart to a corner of the church with the Cardinal and his aunt and with his councillors, and presently the Cardinal came and told me from the King that he knew of my desire to go to Babylonia and Mount Sinai, and that as the King had to send an ambassador to the Sultan about his affairs he had asked me to accept the office, and that by doing this I should be serving the King well. I knew that the Cardinal placed the affair in that light in order to honour me, and I replied that I was content to serve the King in this manner, since I knew him to be a Christian, and of the nation of France. Thereupon, the King sent for me to dine with him and the Cardinal, and he gave me directions for my journey.

CHAPTER VIII

Departure from Cyprus.—Damietta.—Weasels and carrier-pigeons.—A narrow escape.—The Nile.—Crocodiles.—Hippopotami.—Journey up the Nile to Babylonia (Cairo).—The Mamelukes.—Reception by the Sultan of Egypt.—La Matarea.—The Pyramids.—Elephants.—A Giraffe.—A game of Polo.

I DEPARTED for Paphos, where the King had ordered me to be received in a village on a mountain, for the plague was in Paphos, and this village had escaped, and I lodged in the house of Diego Thenorio, a Castilian squire, with whom I had much pleasure. At the end of three days a ship with eighteen rowers arrived at Paphos, which was to carry me and the King's interpreter who was with me, the ship being as well victualled as if for the King's household, and with it came the particulars of the business I had to transact with the Sultan. The second day we set sail, and after being eleven days at sea, with favourable winds, we arrived at last at the port of Damietta, where the river Nile, which comes down from the terrestrial paradise, flows into the Mediterranean Sea, and there we entered the river and reached Damietta, a league and a half from the sea. It is as big as Salamanca and is abundantly supplied with bread and grapes, and all manner of fruits and sugar. The city is very flat and unwalled and without a castle. It is excessively hot, but the dwellings are very cool. There are so many weasels, both in the streets and houses, that they are more numerous than are mice with us, even in places where they abound. I saw there for the first time carrier pigeons[1] which take letters in their tail-feathers. They carry them from the place where they are bred to other places, and when the letters are detached they are set free and return to their homes. By this means the

inhabitants have speedy news of all who come and go by sea or land, and thus escape surprise, since they live without defences, and have neither walls nor fortresses.

As soon as I arrived I was taken to the Governor, and I told him that I had come to the Sultan and asked him for a small boat to carry me farther, since the ship which had been sent with me could not be navigated in the river, and he gave directions for me to be received in his house while the necessary arrangements were being made. While I was there certain Moors came, saying that I was a Catalan, and that they had seen me at meat with the Lord of Candelor, and that they could prove it, and they brought two Turkish gentlemen who, they said, had been present and could testify to the truth of what was alleged. And they came and saw me, but said at once that the Moors lied. Whereupon I enquired: "If the Turks had said otherwise, what would have been my fate?" They replied that I should have been executed at once, since whatever a Turk said was accepted as true. In this district more dates are produced than in any other part of the world. The Nile passes through the city, that is, one of two arms of the river which separate about a day's journey from Babylonia.[2] In the month of September, when I was there, the water rises and floods the whole country, and when the water is at its height great numbers of fish enter the river from the sea and are found even among the houses. The heat is very great, and consequently the houses are built for the most part with openings towards the river, so that water can be collected easily, and at times the fish come in through the openings and are washed up on to the ground and caught.

In this river there are great beasts which breed there called cocatriz,[3] and when they are in the water neither man nor beast can escape them. They say that they are afraid of buffaloes, and for this cause, since there

are no bridges in those parts, nor can any be made because of the great ſtretches of ſand, the poor people, who would otherwiſe have to hire boats, mount these buffaloes and croſs the river upon them without any danger. These creatures are accuſtomed to come out of the water five or six paces, and when it is sunny they become very sleepy, and those that set out to kill them take a lance with an arrow at the end, fitted with barbs, which grip when they enter and faſten themselves in the flesh. At the other end a cord is tied, some 100 or 150 fathoms long, and when they approach the beaſt they ſtrike below the ribs, which is the only vulnerable spot, and the iron enters, whereupon they pull the cord tight. As soon as the beaſt feels that it is hurt it makes for the water, and they play out the cord until it becomes tired. Then they pull it ashore and carry it about through the towns and villages, begging alms, as they do in Caſtile when they kill a wolf. These creatures are shaped like a lizard. Their top and bottom teeth fit into each other so closely that when they seize anything they cannot easily let go. On land they flee from everything, because they are not at home there. I saw many of these creatures in that river. They say also that in the same river there are other beaſts, although I did not see them, which are neither more nor less than horses, except that their jaws are as broad as their foreheads, and they come out of the water to graze, and the men make pits in the ground and cover them, like the wolf pits in Caſtile, and so they kill them, although they do no harm either in or out of the water. The water of the Nile is the beſt in the world and seems, in truth, to be water of paradise. During the whole period of my visit I drank nothing but this water, although I could have had excellent wine. In this place there are quails like those of Caſtile, which they sell, ten for a maravedi, and they kill them with dogs, beating them

up with sticks with two or three bells fastened to the end.

I remained at Damietta eight days, by which time the Governor had a ship prepared to take me to Babylonia. These ships are as long as a great galley, and are furnished with rooms from one end to the other where one can lodge. They have flat keels, since they have to ride in shallow water. They carry much cargo and are rigged with a sail as high as a carack's, but it is a narrow and lateen sail like that of a galley. It happens at times, when the river is rising, they cannot move a yard forward, although they work with sails and oars, unless they can get clear of the current, or land men to tow them with long ropes. They carry three drums, one in the poop, one in the prow and one amidships to frighten away the cocatriz. They do not dare to take water from the river by hand, but they bind a vessel to a long pole and take water in that manner.

I now departed from Damietta, continuing my journey up the river. On either side the shore is sprinkled with villages down to the water's edge. I arrived at the place where the two arms of the river separate, the one I followed, and the other goes to Alexandria. There are men at Babylonia[4] who shave the head, the beard, the eyebrows and the eyelids, and they appear to live like mad people, saying that they do this out of holiness, and that for the service of God they eschew the world and its pomps, and for this reason also they shave themselves. Some go about wearing horns, others bedaubed with honey and feathered, and others carrying poles with lanterns and lights hanging from them; others have bows and arrows drawn ready to shoot, and thus in diverse manners they go about, saying that they are persecutors of the Christians. The Moors show them great reverence. One day I met a number of them and asked where they

were going, and they said that they were about to enter the fire with the Christian dogs to see who would burn the faster. In Alexandria there is abundance of flax from which they make excellent linen.

So, continuing our journey, we came in seven days to Babylonia and disembarked at the port, where there is a corn-market frequented by Christians, and we unloaded all our goods from the ship and lodged there that night. The next day in the morning we hired asses, very well equipped with saddles and bridles, and very fast, with a man to guide us to the house of the Sultan's chief interpreter, and it took us from dawn to midday to reach his house. When we had arrived I gave him the letters and saluted him from the King of Cyprus, and paid him also the 200 ducats sent by the King in accordance with the provisions of his father's will, which directed that sum to be paid to him for life, in return for services rendered to the King in prison. He received me very graciously and lodged me in his house. I remained there two days before I could see the Sultan, and during that time the interpreter spoke much with me, and asked me about myself, and heard from me how that I was a Castilian, born in Seville, whereat he was very pleased, for he too had been born there, but had been carried as a child to Jerusalem with his father, who was a Jew, and on his father's death he became a Moor. At first they called him Haym, but now Saym. He wanted to know who I was and whence I had come, and I hid nothing of my deeds in order to avail myself of his services and counsel.

I was as well received in the house of this interpreter as if I had been his son, and he allowed me to mix with his wives and children, telling me that it was the greatest honour he could show me, and, indeed, it seemed that I was of his country, since his children were so fond of me. This gentleman would be about 90

years old, but, notwithstanding his age, he was still able to beget children, and while I was there one of his wives gave birth to a son. He has four Christian wives, such as are purchased in the Black Sea, for they hold it a great dishonour to marry a Moor by birth. During those three days, before I could see the Sultan, he showed me many things, so that it would take long to write of them. The third day he took the letters which I brought for the Sultan, and he carried them himself, and showed them and took counsel about the replies. That night he brought them back to me closed and told me, as I was his fellow countryman, that the Sultan had already seen the letters, since it was held to be a disgrace not to reply immediately, and therefore it was the custom to read them first, but that I should be well advised to propose my business without letting it be understood that I knew what had been told me.

The next morning he sent to make ready the beasts for me and mine, and at sunrise we set out for the Sultan's palace. Before we arrived we were able to eat and drink by the way, for men go about carrying portable stoves with ready cooked food, others sell fruit, others water, and many things besides. We arrived at the principal mosque, which is a very remarkable thing to see, but there are better in Christian lands. We then came to a great square where there were men on horseback, and armed tents, and we learnt that outside the city there were more horsemen, for this was the day on which the Sultan is saluted. I cannot describe the number of men-at-arms, on horse and on foot, and keep silence, since I do not wish to relate what is hard to credit, although, indeed, in these parts anything may be said and believed. We arrived at the door of the Sultan's residence and left our beasts, and climbed the steps to the entrance. This dwelling is about the same size as Villareal. The streets are

full of men going to and fro from place to place, and they told me that these were the Mamelukes, whom we call renegade barbarians,[5] and the Sultan buys them for cash in the Black Sea, and in all places where the Christians sell them. When they arrive here they become Moors, and they teach them the law, and instruct them in horsemanship and to shoot with the bow. Then they are examined by the chief Doctor, and are given wages and rations and sent to the city. No man can become Sultan, nor admiral, nor have any honour or office except he be one of those renegades, nor can any Moor by birth ride on horseback under penalty of death. It is the Mamelukes who have all the honours of knighthood. Their sons have somewhat less honour, and the grandchildren still less again, and after that they are accounted Moors by birth. This is in order to augment the number of Mohammedans: therefore are they called the increasers of the law of Mohammed. The women do not enjoy this prerogative, but a Moor would rather take a Christian woman without dowry, than a Moorish woman, however richly dowered she may be, especially if she is a Moor by birth.

Continuing through the streets we reached a great door which was locked, and they opened it, and we entered and came to a great court full of horsemen, drawn up in order against the walls, and opening another door they took us to a square where horsemen were likewise marshalled. They then opened another door, and we came to a further square, where men were also stationed, but here there were negroes with clubs in their hands. The chief interpreter made me wait here with my attendants until he should return. In a short space of time he came back and escorted me through a door to a great square, in which were numbers of horsemen in the same order as before. In the centre of the square was a large and sumptuous tent

with its trappings, where the Sultan was to dine, and where he was to receive the salute, and close at hand a pavilion had been set up, and a high platform with a seat where the Sultan was to alight. The chief interpreter told me to wait in the centre of that square and that the Sultan would come out and pass by with him, but that I was not to make any reverence, for such is their custom in their disdain for Christians. While I was there they opened a great door and the Sultan came out on horseback. His son preceded him on foot with about 200 horsemen, and he passed close by me and sat himself on the above-mentioned seat. A few days previously the Sultan had set free from prison a son of his treasurer, who had succeeded his father, and who was very wealthy, having much gold and pearls and precious stones, and other things of great value, and to honour that feast, and to return to the Sultan's favour, he had sent him a black horse shod with gold, the bridle and saddle being also garnished with gold. In the saddle-bow was a ruby which was said to weigh an Egyptian pound and a half, which looked as large as a good-sized orange. In the back saddle-bow were three rubies as large as fowls' eggs, and a scimitar worth much gold. The hangings were of white damask, ornamented with a border of valuable pearls.

The chief interpreter now came to me, and told me that I must make a show of kissing the ground before approaching the Sultan, and he took the letters which I carried, and touched my head and mouth with them for greeting, and gave them to the Sultan. Since they were written in a foreign language he read them out in the Turkish language, for no one at the court speaks anything else. They say that this was ordained when the Turk adopted the law of Mohammed some time ago, and that it is done out of honour. The Sultan enquired of me concerning the King of Cyprus,

and the Cardinal, his uncle, and Mosen Suarez, and also concerning others of the Kingdom, and when I had replied he assured me that he was pleased to grant the requests of the King, which were as follows: the King had sent me to beg that the Sultan would not send the Mamelukes each year, as he was wont to do, to collect the tribute, since they caused the King great expense, but that the King would send the tribute in four months, and further that the Sultan would accept the tribute in camlets, at the price they were worth in Babylonia. Also that he would allow the King to sell his salt, which was a source of great revenue throughout Syria, without paying duty, and all this was granted. The Sultan also gave directions that I was to be well lodged and that I was to have whatever was necessary, and this was done. That day the Sultan gave me a robe which he was accustomed to give, as an emblem of vassalage, to the King of Cyprus, which was of olive green and red, worked with gold and lined with ermine. Then the Sultan descended from his seat and came to the tent, whereupon the salute was given, and he dined. I then took leave of him for that day.

While I was there a hundred men, or thereabouts, entered, bringing a Moor with them, and they threw him on the ground, and stripped him, and gave him 200 strokes on the belly and shoulders with rods. They told me, further, that all criminal justice was administered in the presence of the Sultan. When we returned to that place we found none of those whom we had seen before, except the negroes, and from there we came to the great square, and mounted our beasts, but there were no gentlemen there nor in the tents, only poor men with sieves, sifting the sand. I enquired what it signified, and was told that they were vagrant people, who were seeking whatever might have fallen to the ground from so great a multitude of

men. That day we were occupied until sunset in returning to our lodging. The following day we rested, and I arranged to send the Sultan's dispatch to the King of Cyprus in that vessel of his which was at Damietta, and that it should return for me in two months, during which time I intended to go to St. Catherine's monastery on Mount Sinai.

After sending the Sultan's dispatch to the King of Cyprus I remained in Babylonia about a month, marvelling at many things which were passing strange to those of our nation. Indeed, I had great good fortune in having such a guide as the chief interpreter, for he took much pleasure in doing whatever I desired. One day we rode out at dawn to La Matarea, where the balsam is obtained. It is about a league from the city and we did not arrive until mid-day, although we had very swift beasts. Our lodging might be said to be in the centre of the city, so that from this one can well see how extensive the city is. La Matarea is a great orchard enclosed by a wall, and in it is the garden where the balsam grows.[6] It is about 60 or 70 square feet in extent, and here it grows, and it resembles a two year old vine, and they collect it in the month of October. The Sultan comes with great ceremony to collect the oil, and they say that there is so little that it does not reach half an *azumbre* of our measure. But they take the branches and boil them in the oil and deliver them to the world as balsam. Having finished gathering the roots, they commence at once to cultivate the ground, and they take specially prepared cuttings and drive them in, and they water them with that water which Our Lady, the Virgin, called forth in that place when she was fleeing with her Son into Egypt. It is a place of great devotion for us Christians. When they have watered the plants with that water, the next day they find they have taken root. Many times they have tried to water them with Nile or other

water, but the roots dry up at once. As one goes out from this garden there is a very great fig-tree, which produces figs of Faron, which are red, and inside the trunk is a little building like a small chapel. The tree, they say, opened of itself, and there Our Lady and her Son hid when they were in danger of capture. As we were returning to Babylonia along the river Nile, we saw many gardens and fine houses of the nobles, and we took all that day to return, and did not reach our lodgings until midnight.

The next day we went to see the Granaries of Joseph,[7] which are three leagues from the mouth of the river, in the desert. Although they say that there are many more further inland, there are only three here, two great ones, and one lesser one. They are diamond shaped, with the apex raised, and they must be much higher than the Great Tower at Seville. As one enters through the door there is a wall joined to another, making a circular stairway which reaches to the top, with many windows. And the beasts, when they are laden, climb up and are unloaded through those windows, and so they fill the granaries to the top. Certainly I never thought that there was such a great building in the world to-day, nor have I seen the like before or since.

This day we returned to Babylonia, and the following day we went to see the place where they keep the elephants, and we saw seven. They are black in colour and larger than camels. The front and back legs are so firm that they seem to be of marble. The foot is round with a very strong hoof. The legs are said to be jointed, but they have no marrow. The eyes are red, and very small like a farthing. The tail is short like a bear's. The ears resemble a shield, and the head is like one of those great jars which hold six *arrobas*.[8] The tusks are four spans in length. The mouth is very small, and from the lip there hangs in front a trunk of about six palms' length. The beasts can

AN ELEPHANT
From the Pilgrim Book of Gabriel Muffel of Nuremberg (1465)

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extend and contract it at will, and with it they grasp whatever they want to eat, and carry it to the mouth, or take up water when they need it. These beasts seem to be very knowing. They play tricks, and at times they will fill their trunks with water and squirt it over anyone they choose. They play also with a lance, throwing it up and catching it, with many other sports. When they are in heat they take them at dawn and put them in the river to cool them, otherwise they could not control them. They have a very hard skin, and if they are wounded they put them where the moon shines on them, and the next day they are healed. The drivers carry an iron spike fastened to a pole, and they prick them behind the ears, and turn them where they will, for the skin is very tender there, and even a fly alighting in that place will give them pain. They feed them with grain and barley, as they do horses with us. It is said that in India they place castles upon them, which hold sixteen men, and when they wish to fight they cover the tusks with steel. These animals are said to be very long-lived. This day we returned to our lodging, having seen many strange sights. The following day we went to see an animal called a giraffe. It is as large as a stag. Its front legs are two fathoms long and its back legs no more than a cubit. In general appearance it is like a stag. It is dappled, the stripes being white and yellow. The neck is as long as a good sized tower is high. It is very tame. If they give it bread to eat with the hand it lowers its head and makes a great arc with its neck. They say that these creatures live to a great age, and that this one has been there more than 200 years.

That day we went to see the city of Babylonia. It is divided into three sections. The first they call Greater Babylonia, the second Cairo, and the third Mistra. By the side of the city of Babylonia, in the river which passes that quarter, there are three columns

in the water with certain lines and ancient letters upon them, and in the month of September, when the river rises, guards are placed there, and they watch every hour when the water increases,[9] and they report the matter to certain criers on the land, who go through the city every hour, crying out how much the water has risen, and when the water is fully risen the people know to what extent they can sow, and whether the year will be fruitful or lean. They say that the setting up of these columns was the first work undertaken in Babylonia. In the ancient part of this city there are many notable houses and gardens, even on the terraces, and great trees and vast numbers of caves and cisterns for storing the Nile water. This day we returned to our lodging, and I arranged with the interpreter to go the following day to see the Sultan, and crave licence to depart for Mount Sinai. We accordingly went in the morning to the great palace, but found that the Sultan had gone hunting, and we followed him and overtook him about a league from the city. He was exceedingly well attended, having, as it appeared to me, more than five or six thousand horsemen, and many falcons and leopards. That day the Sultan dined in the field, and afterwards they played a game which is customary there, in this manner:[10] they place a ball in the centre of the field, and some thousand horsemen, more or less, take up their position on one side, and they draw lines on either side in front of them, and each one has a mallet in the hand, the handle of which is fixed into a staff, and they all attack the ball at the same time, with intent, on the one side, to drive it across the line, while the others seek to do the same on their part, and those who succeed in driving the ball across the line are the victors. That day one of the players tried to hinder the Sultan's son, and he took out his sword and tried to kill his opponent, and there was a great commotion until the Sultan came up and parted them.

CHAPTER IX

The journey to Mount Sinai.—Trade in mummy.—The Monastery.—Tafur proposes to visit India.—Arrival of a caravan.—Nicolo de' Conti.—He relates the story of his life.—The Red Sea.

That day I begged leave of the Sultan to go to Mount Sinai, and he consented, and ordered that one of his interpreters should go with me, and he provided three camels for me and mine, and would accept no payment. I then took my leave and departed in two days. In those two days, indeed, there was little leisure, since there were so many strange and remarkable things to see, and as the weather was very hot they brought me each morning a vase of water to drink, which was specially treated, and in it were certain seeds like hemp, and of a truth it was a very healthy drink. It is their custom to drink it fasting in the summer before dinner. The Sultan's interpreter prepared everything that was necessary, and recommended me to the interpreter who was to go with me, and wrote himself to the Patriarch of Alexandria who lived in Cairo (who selects the Superior of the monastery of St. Catherine at Mount Sinai), to recommend me to him. We departed from Cairo, and crossed the lifeless desert of Egypt with much labour and in great peril.[1] The heat was such that I was amazed that any man could withstand it. These deserts, they say, provide the mummies, which are the bodies of those who die there. For with the great dryness which is in those parts, the bodies do not decay, but the radical moisture is consumed, leaving the bodies entire and dried, so that they can be ground up. There is no road in the desert, for the wind effaces it and shifts the sands from one place to another and makes great hills,

and people die there, as I have related. They navigate here with the compass as at sea. There is no habitation between Babylonia and Mount Sinai, and the camels carry everything, as well for the travellers as for themselves.

The journey to Mount Sinai endured for fifteen days. This mountain is very lofty and stands quite alone, about half a league from the Red Sea. On the summit of this mountain there was formerly a monastery, where the body of St. Catherine was kept, and they say that one year, when there was great scarcity of bread, the monks, on that account, and also in view of the great labour in climbing those heights, went to Babylonia, leaving the monastery and the holy body unattended. Thereupon the blessed St. Catherine appeared to them and told them to return, and that they would find provisions and a convenient place to live in, and that where they should find a great heap of wheat, there they should build their monastery and house her body. The monks thereupon returned, and found at the foot of the mountain a great heap of wheat, and there, thanking God and the Virgin St. Catherine for the blessings they had received, they erected their monastery which is still a most notable place. The monks ascended the mountain and brought down the body with great honour, and placed it in the monastery at the foot, where they now live, not, indeed, neglecting what is on the mountain itself, for there are many holy places there, it being the place where God gave the tables of the law to Moses, and where He appeared to him in the burning bush. Here also is the place where He bade Moses strike the rock with his rod, and the water gushed forth, which to this day runs down to the foot.

The lower monastery is a fine building. There are in it about fifty or sixty persons, both monks and servants, and the church is well fashioned in the Greek

ST. CATHERINE'S MONASTERY ON MOUNT SINAI
By Gabriel Muffel (1465)

[*face p. 82*

manner. The body of St. Catherine is beneath the chief altar. I did not see the body, because they are not accustomed to show it, and, indeed, the place is not convenient for seeing it, but it appeared to me, from its size, that the body must be greater by a span than the tallest women who could be found in the world to-day. There are in a house certain bodies of men enbalmed. Some say they are the bodies of knights who visited that holy place and died there. Others say that some knights of Greece were carried there after death, and it is a place of great devotion. The monastery derives a large income from all Greece, and a great lord of Candia left to it, when he died, an income of 4000 ducats, but since the place is very remote, and the provisioning of it costs much money, part of the revenue is expended in maintaining an establishment at Babylonia, and the Patriarch of Alexandria lives there. He provides for everything, and the revenues are paid to him. He also elects the Patriarch who is sent to Greater India to Prester John, and while I was in Babylonia, the former Patriarch being dead, he chose his successor and dispatched him thither.

After spending three days at the monastery, I bethought myself whether it would be possible to go to Greater India, and I spoke privately with the Prior about the matter. He told me that a caravan, which was the means of communication with those parts, was due to arrive within two or three days, and that we could then obtain information as to the possibility of making the journey, but that he was altogether opposed to it. In four or five days the caravan duly arrived, bringing so many camels with it that I cannot give an account of them, as I do not wish to appear to speak extravagantly. This caravan carries all the spices, pearls, precious stones and gold, perfumes, and linen, and parrots, and cats from India, with many other things, which they distribute throughout the world.

One half goes to Babylonia, and from there to Alexandria, and the rest to Damascus, and thence to the port of Beyrout.

I went to the shore of the Red Sea, which is half a league from Mount Sinai, to see the arrival of the caravan, and I found that a Venetian had come with it, called Nicolo de' Conti,[2] a gentleman of good birth who brought with him his wife and two sons and a daughter, all of whom had been born in India. It appeared that he and they had become Moors, having been forced to renounce their Faith in Mecca, which is the Moors' holy place. As soon as he saw me he came up and enquired who I was, and what I did there, and what was my profession. I told him that I came from Italy, having been brought up at the court of the King of Cyprus, and that I was travelling upon his affairs to the Sultan who had given me licence to come there, and that I intended to pass on to India. He told me at once that I ought not to attempt it, and that, however much I desired it, it could not be accomplished. As I seemed to be fixed in my determination, he besought and conjured me to tell him truly who I was, and said that he could do me a great service, which was that he would tell me what I ought to do, and that I could trust him implicitly, since he was a Christian as I was. He also promised to relate the events of his life, and how he had come there. I, observing that he was a person both grave and discreet and of good address, told him that I was a noble of Spain, and had come to the Holy Sepulchre, and from there to Babylonia, with intent to see Mount Sinai and to go on to India.

On hearing this Nicolo de' Conti showed great pleasure and said as follows: "You must know that "at the time when Timur-Beg was ruling I found "myself in Alexandria with certain moneys of my "father, and from there I had to go to Babylonia, and

" through bad management and youthful inexperience,
" for I was only eighteen years of age, I lost what
" I had, and as I was desperate and ashamed to return
" home, I went to the place where Timur-Beg was,
" and remained a year at his court. From there I
" sought the means to go into Greater India and
" learnt that all was secure, for at that time the rule of
" Timur-Beg extended from India to the Red Sea.
" When I arrived in India I was taken to see Prester
" John,[3] who received me very graciously and showed
" me many favours, and married me to the woman I
" now have with me, and she bore me these children.
" I lived in India for forty years, with a great longing
" to return to my country. I gained much wealth,
" and after Timur-Beg had died, and the country
" was divided up, I arranged to journey to the Red
" Sea, and to go to Mecca, and to the place to which
" I am now come, and for this purpose I obtained a
" safe-conduct from the Sultan. I spent two years in
" procuring this, but at last he sent it to me. When
" I arrived with my wife and children at Mecca, they
" ordered us to abjure the Faith or to be killed. I
" myself was ready to receive martyrdom, but I knew
" that my wife and children would rather renounce the
" Faith than die, and I therefore decided to accept the
" alternative, hoping that God would save us in due
" time. But the Sultan must have been a participator
" in all this, in order to have a share in that which they
" robbed me of. Now this is my life and the story of
" my past, and in what concerns you I pray you, in the
" name of God, and for the love which you bear Him,
" and since you are a Christian and of my country,
" that you will not embark on such madness, for the
" way is very long and troublesome and perilous; the
" country is inhabited by strange races without king or
" laws or rulers; how can you expect to pass without
" a safe-conduct, and whom shall he fear who is minded

"to kill you? Further, the air is strange, and food "and drink are different from those in your country. "You will meet with bestial people, unable to govern "themselves, and although there are monstrous things "to be seen they are not enough to give you satisfaction. "You will see heaps of gold and pearls and precious "stones, but what shall they profit you since the people "are beasts who wear them?"

These and other things were told me by Nicolo de' Conti, and finally I concluded that if I did not fly thither it was impossible to make the journey. I saw clearly that it was his great affection and the kindness of his nature which moved him to counsel me thus, and as it well appeared that he told me the truth, I tired of my project, and we returned to the monastery and remained there three days, and the company prepared for the road, some, as I have said, to go to Babylonia, and the rest to Damascus. During those three days I did nothing but visit various places and the Red Sea, and the place where the Children of Israel entered the sea when Pharaoh was following after them, and the sea became dry land and the waters were divided. From there we saw an island called Shushonah, whence, they say, the Jews came who are called in Castile Abens-susenes.

CHAPTER X

The return journey from Mount Sinai.—Nicolo de' Conti continues his relation.—Prester John.

We departed from Mount Sinai, and I took my leave from the Prior and the monks, and they gave me the device of St. Catherine, which is a wheel with teeth of gold, and out of my own poverty I gave them money. I left my arms, and set out on my road with those of the caravan and with Nicolo de' Conti. During the journey I did little else except hear of his doings in India, and he gave me many things written with his own hand. I asked him concerning Prester John[1] and his authority, and he told me that he was a great lord, and that he had twenty-five kings in his service, although they were not great rulers, and also that many people who live without law, but follow heathen rites, are in subjection to him.

They say that there is in India a very high mountain,[2] the ascent of which is exceedingly difficult, so much so that in ancient times those below knew nothing about those above, and those above had no knowledge of those below, and a road was made, and a chain was stretched from the top to the bottom, to which those who ascended or descended could cling. On the top of the mountain is a great plain where they sow and reap corn, and keep cattle and grain, and where there are many orchards full of fruit, and much water; all things, in short, necessary to the life of man. On one side is a very notable monastery, to which it is the custom for those of fit rank to be Prester to send twelve ancient men, nobles by descent, and virtuous, to elect a new Prester John when the office is vacant, and they do it in this manner. The chief sons and daughters

are sent there to serve, and they marry one with another and raise up children, and they provide there all that is necessary for their existence, and give them horses and arms, and bows and arrows, and they teach them warlike arts, and the art of governing men. The electors who are there take counsel daily, and observe that one which appears to them most fit to succeed to the government when Prester John vacates it, and are already agreed as to the person to be chosen. When the ruler is at last dead, his knights, as the custom is, carry him to that mountain on a bier, covered in mourning, and the electors, beholding them from the heights where they are, take the one who has been chosen, and give him to the knights in exchange for the dead ruler. They then take up the body and bury it in the mountain, with the honours due to it, while the others go with their lord and, amidst great feasts and rejoicings, make their submission to him. Thither come certain races, bringing presents. Some bring pearls and others stones of great worth, or gold rods, each one according to the land where he lives, or where he was born. Nicolo de' Conti told me also that in that mountain of Ceylon very fine cinnamon is grown. He said, further, that there is a fruit there like a great round pumpkin, and inside it are three separate fruits, each having its own taste.

He told me also of a sea coast where the crabs, on reaching land, and being exposed to the air, turn to stone. He spoke, too, of a country belonging to the heathen where there is a famous place of pilgrimage. Here a woman brought forth two sons at one birth, and immediately they were born they covered their eyes with their hands, and said that they did not intend to live in such a wicked world, and they betook themselves to a mountain, and there they lived and died. Where the one died there appeared a great lake of water, and where the other died a great lake of mud,

and the people throw themselves in and die, saying that they are going to glory. Others there are who, in order to leave behind them a reputation for strength, and that their sons may be known to be the sons of good men, make an apparatus like shears, and putting their heads between the blades they force them to shut with their feet, and so cut off their heads.[3] Nicolo de' Conti told me also that he had seen people eating human flesh, the strangest thing he had ever seen. This, be it understood, is a heathen practice, but he had seen Christians eating the raw flesh of animals, after which it is necessary to eat of a very odoriferous herb within fifteen to twenty days, but if they delay longer they become lepers.

I learnt also that Prester John, desiring to know whence the Nile had its beginnings, prepared boats and sent men and provided much food, and ordered them to bring back news of its source, and they set out and saw so many strange countries and peoples and unfamiliar animals that it was a great marvel, but as they had eaten all their victuals they had to return without having found what they sought, and Prester John was much cast down. He then took counsel as to whether it was possible to send men who would not perish for lack of food, and he ordered them to take young children, and, depriving them of milk, he reared them on raw fish (which is no great marvel, for it is reported by those that go to Guinea that, in those parts, the heathens eat nothing but raw fish). After these children were grown up he prepared boats and nets, and ordered that they were in no wise to return without certain information concerning that which they sought. They departed and journeyed up the river, through divers countries, but they communicated with no one for fear of being prevented, and they came to a great lake like the sea, and they followed the shore, and went all round it to find out whence the water came which

made that lake. They came at last to an opening where the water entered, and they proceeded until they came to a great mountain range which was very lofty and precipitous, and which seemed to be hewn out of the rock, and the top of it could not be seen. In it was a great opening through which the water poured, and close to that mountain range, and joined to it, was another as high as the former, and it could well be seen that the water came from it. The travellers decided to send up one of their party to report, but he that ascended, so they say, having beheld what was within, refused to come down or even to answer questions. Another of the party was then sent up, but it was with him as with the first. When the others saw this, and that there was no possibility of obtaining more information, they left those two on the mountain, being unable to recover them, and returned by the way they had come. They related to their Master all that had befallen them, telling him that nothing further could be discovered, since it was clear that God did not desire that mortals should know more, and that He had therefore locked up the secret in that wise.

Nicolo de' Conti also told me that he saw a heathen people who are not accustomed to take a dowry with their wives when they marry, but if the man dies first the woman has to burn herself, in the same way as the heathen burn dead bodies. But if the woman dies first the man does not have to burn himself, for they say that woman was made for the service of man, but not man for the woman; and if the principal should perish, the accessory is not worthy even of mention. This is what they do: when the man dies they put the corpse in the place where it is to be burnt. The woman then attires herself as finely as she can, saying that it is for nuptials better than the first, and that she is to accompany her husband for eternity in the place where he is. The people make merry and sing, both she and

her kinsmen, and they enquire whether anyone desires to send a message to those on the other side, since she is about to depart thither in company with her husband. Then they take off her clothes, and dress her in a sad robe, like a shroud, and sing dirges and sad songs the while. She then bids farewell to all and lies down beside her husband, placing her head on his right arm, and they say many things in conclusion, chiefly that the wife ought only to live so long as she is honoured and defended by that arm, and they set fire to them, and thus, cheerfully and willingly, she goes to her death. In another place, where they have the same custom, there is this difference, that when the marriage is celebrated they ask the woman whether she wishes to be burnt or not. If she consents, she has to submit to the practice mentioned above, but if she declines, she has to provide a dowry. On the death of her husband the same ceremony is gone through, but when it comes to the burning, they put in her head-dress in place of the woman, and she forfeits her dowry to the husband's heirs. Those that refuse to be burnt are looked upon as bad wives and not legitimate. It is said that there are very few such, and one of them, who did not elect to be burnt, left the country for shame and came to live in Babylonia, and Nicolo de' Conti saw her there.

Nicolo de' Conti told me that, although he had been plundered, he still had many things with him and much riches, such as pearls and precious stones. But he dwelt most upon the quantity of health-giving medicines which he had, so many, indeed, that their value was not to be estimated. He showed me a ruby of great worth, and also a round hat of grass, as delicate as the finest silk which could be found. He enquired of me where, if God brought him safely to Christian lands, his goods would have the best market. I told him that the Emperor was at war with the King of Poland, and it was but a short time since he had come

into his Kingdom, and that he had little wealth, that there was less wealth in France on account of her long-ſtanding wars, and that in Italy, as he knew better than I, they only bought to sell again. Further, that it appeared to me he would find the beſt market in Spain, chiefly on account of the great wealth of our King, but also because in all our wars we are always victorious, and have never been beaten. The people, I said, were very rich and valued such things more than anyone else. He, therefore, resolved to come to Spain.

I enquired whether he had ever seen monſters in human shape, such as some have reported, that is men with one leg and one eye, or but a cubit in height, or as tall as a lance. He replied that he had never met with such, but that he had seen beaſts with very ſtrange shapes. In a heathen land he had seen an elephant of a great size and as white as snow, which is a very ſtrange thing, since they are almoſt all black, and they kept it faſtened to a column with chains of gold, and adored it as a god. He had seen also an ass which they brought to Preſter John, not much larger than a hound, and of as many colours as it is possible to enumerate; also many unicorns and other animals, which it would take long to describe. He told me as well that he had seen them set up those caſtles upon the elephants, which they use when they go to fight. Preſter John and his people are said to be as good Catholics and Chriſtians as could be found anywhere, but they know nothing of our Romish Church, nor are governed by it. This lord is said to be held in such reverence that if the greateſt of his subjects does anything worthy of death, he sends a servant with a letter ordering him to submit to execution by that servant, and in obedience to that letter, ſtraightway he lowers his head and suffers death. Nicolo de' Conti told me also that he saw a noble lord who brought a

great present of gold to Preſter John, and had so much glory in what he brought and said so much to him, bragging that no one had ever done him such service before, that Preſter John immediately ordered him to be put to death, saying that it was the beſt service he could do him, which was no small one for that lord.

I learnt also that the people in those parts are very skilled in the Black Arts, and that when navigating in the Red Sea, de' Conti saw them consult with demons, and he told me that he could descry a vague black shape moving up and down the mainmaſt. The sailors then conjured it to keep ſtill and demanded: "What of our voyage?" and the shape made answer: "You will have six days of dead calm when the sea will be like oil, but be prepared, for you will have as many days of very heavy ſtorms." He described their ships as like great houses, and not fashioned at all like ours. They have ten or twelve sails, and great ciſterns of water within, for there the winds are not very ſtrong, and when at sea they have no dread of islands or rocks. These ships carry all the cargoes which the caravans receive from them at Mecca [Jedda], which is the port where they unload. De' Conti told me that Mecca is a great place, larger than Seville. It is in subjection to no ruler, except to the chief of their law, whom they regard as their Pope, and they look on the Sultan as Emperor. There is a very rich mosque there where they keep the body of Mohammed, and certain Indians from Ethiopia who come there. . . . He said also that they could dam the water of the Nile, which runs from India to Ethiopia, and through all the land of Egypt to the Mediterranean Sea, and which divides itself into two arms, the one entering the sea close to Alexandria and the other by Damietta. If that water ceased to flow, the whole country would be depopulated.

I learnt from Nicolo de' Conti that Preſter John kept him continuously at his court, enquiring of him

as to the Christian world, and concerning the princes and their estates, and the wars they were waging, and while he was there he saw Prester John on two occasions dispatch ambassadors to Christian princes, but he did not hear whether any news of them had been received. He saw, however, the preparations made by Prester John to come with his hosts to Jerusalem, which is much farther than the journey to Europe. He saw the church where lies the body of St. Thomas, who converted the Indians. He mentioned also the drift which comes down, when the Nile rises, from the terrestrial paradise, which they call perfume of aloes, and in the time of St. Thomas, when he went about preaching and the people would not be converted, there came down the Nile a great tree which was washed ashore in that place. The people went to their ruler and besought him to come and see the greatest marvel in the world, namely, an aloe tree, greater than had ever been seen, and he came at once, and when he saw it he ordered them to carry it away with oxen, but they could not move it. He then directed that it should be cut up, but the tools would not enter the wood. St. Thomas the Apostle, being there, told them that if they would be baptized and believe in God, who did these marvels, he alone with his hand would lift the tree and carry it to the desired place, and the ruler and his people replied that if he would do that they would believe. St. Thomas then crossed himself and laid hold of the tree, and carried it to the place which they showed him. When the people saw that miracle, all were baptized and became Christians. The Apostle then took that wood and had it sawed up, and made a chapel which he roofed with it, and there his body now lies. The Indians have to-day such devotion for the Apostle, that they take earth from the place where he is buried, and make pellets, which they carry always in their breasts, saying that in the moment of death,

if they cannot communicate, it suffices to eat one of these. Nicolo de' Conti gave me five or six of them, which I believe I have to this day. The people of Greater India are a little darker in colour than we are, but in Ethiopia they are much darker, and so on until you come to the black negroes, who are at the Equator, which they call the Torrid Zone.

CHAPTER XI

Arrival in Cairo.—The story of Pedro de la Randa.—Administration of justice.—Life in the streets of Cairo.

Our journey occupied fifteen days, in view of the great trouble we had in making it, but with the pleasure of hearing such good things from Nicolo de' Conti I did not notice the labour. We reached Babylonia, and appointed to meet each day in the church of St. Martha, where is interred the holy body of a Castilian called Pedro de la Randa, of whom mention is made later. This was because I had to go and take my residence with the Sultan's chief interpreter, and Nicolo de' Conti had to seek lodgings among the Moors. When I arrived at the house of my host, he received me with as much joy as if his own son had come back to him. The next day Nicolo de' Conti went to see the Sultan, and made complaint of the way in which the people had disregarded his safe-conduct, and of the manner in which they had forced him to become a Moor, and had robbed him. The Sultan heard this with much chagrin, and, to compensate de' Conti, he showed him many favours and made him his chief interpreter, equal with the other, and gave him a house and possessions in Babylonia. The following day he came to that church where we had appointed to meet, and told me all that had happened between the Sultan and him, and what they had done for him, and that as he now held office under the Sultan, he could go through his country and visit the sea ports, so that he hoped, with the help of God, to reach Christian lands in safety with his company. He asked me to carry certain letters to Venice, since I was going there, and he wished to know when I intended to depart, and I told him that I was

wearied with so much travelling and that I should stop there twenty or thirty days, which I did. During this time I did little else but see the sights of Babylonia with de' Conti and with the chief interpreter, my Castilian host.

One day my host told me what befell the late Sultan, his master, with a Castilian called Pedro de la Randa,[1] and it was thus. Pedro de la Randa was a corsair and much looked up to in these waters, but one day he was defeated and captured by a Moorish ship, and after having so taken him they ran across a Catalan corsair, who defeated the Moors and took the ship, and with it Pedro de la Randa. The corsair recognized him, and knowing him for a very famous man, he proposed that he should refit Pedro de la Randa and give him a ship and money, on condition that he should be with him always and join the convoy, and that he should pledge his word. Pedro de la Randa replied that the project pleased him well, but he stipulated that they should fight only with Moors and never with Christians, for so he had sworn. The Catalan made an agreement with him, and they came to Rhodes, and there they made ready everything necessary for their venture. They sailed away and waged war on the Moors, taking many of their ships, and making them afraid to attack the Christians. Such was their fame that the Moors were thoroughly frightened, for it seemed as if two of the greatest Christian princes were at sea.

The war continued, and one day, following their custom, which was that if there was nothing to capture on sea one of them should land while the other guarded the ships, the Catalan disembarked at Damietta to make an attack, but so many Moors came up against him that he was very hard pressed. Pedro de la Randa, seeing this from his ship, came at once to shore to succour him, but the Moors attacked them in such numbers that they took them both and carried them to

the Sultan. When the Sultan knew that they had brought that famous corsair who had wrought such havoc among the Moors, he rejoiced greatly, and asked Pedro de la Randa if he was the man who had so greatly injured his people, and he admitted it. He then asked him why he had done this. Pedro de la Randa replied that it was because they were enemies of the Faith: would the Sultan think it fitter for him to spare the Moors and plunder Christians? Then the Sultan decreed that to requite what he had done, and as an example of the justice of God, Pedro de la Randa should renounce the Faith, acknowledge his misdeeds and become a Moor, and that the Sultan would then pardon him and show him favour. But Pedro de la Randa made answer that all the good which the Sultan might do him could not compensate him for the loss of his soul, and the Sultan ordered their heads to be sawn off forthwith, whereupon the Catalan said he would become a Moor. Then Pedro de la Randa approached the Sultan privately and said: "My Lord, I will become a Moor if you will revenge me by killing my companion," and the Sultan was pleased to agree. Pedro de la Randa went apart with the Catalan and said: "Friend, we cannot now save our lives, for even though we should renounce the Faith, the Sultan has decided to kill us, and since this is so let us receive martyrdom from God in palliation of our sins." The Catalan replied that it was well spoken, and he was content, and was immediately put to death. The Sultan then said to Pedro de la Randa: "I have now fulfilled my part of the bargain, do you fulfil yours." But he replied: "Sultan, I did this only to save my companion's soul, since his spirit was so weak that for fear he would have become a Moor: now do with me whatever you think well." The Sultan made answer: "Serve me faithfully; do what I command and go with me to the wars, and I will give you your life." Pedro de la Randa replied:

"On condition that you do not fight against the Christians." And the Sultan agreed, saying: "I promise that I will never put you to fight with Christians, but will make you ruler of all the Christians in my service, and I will show you many favours if you serve me faithfully"; and so he bound himself. The Sultan ordered a house to be prepared, and sent men to serve and gave him maintenance. He summoned also one of his admirals and placed Pedro de la Randa in his charge. They say, further, that as the Sultan was departing to return to the city he called this admiral back, and said: "See to it that the Christian has wine for himself and his household, as much as he needs, so that he may not pine for his own country." This was related to me by the interpreter with whom I was, both to magnify the Sultan, his master, and to please me by speaking well of a Castilian, as he also was.

When this Sultan died, another succeeded him, and he sent at once for that gentleman who had charge of Pedro de la Randa, and ordered that he should be taken, with intent to slay him. But the gentleman fled with him and they hid themselves. The Sultan sought them out and took them both, and ordered Pedro de la Randa to renounce the Faith and become a Moor. But he would not consent, whereupon his head was sawn off, and the Christians took up the body and buried it in a church which is in Babylonia, called St. Martha's church, and it worked many miracles there.

That day justice was administered, and it was as follows. They brought out three men to be killed, and I asked what they had done. The interpreter told me that the night previously a money-changer had been robbed, and since these men were his neighbours, and did not observe the robbers, and had not taken such care of their neighbour's goods as of their own, therefore they had been condemned to die.

I said: "It appears to me that you are punishing those who are without blame and innocent of offence: it is a beſtial sentence." But the interpreter replied: "There are very many of us, and God increases our numbers daily. If we did not visit offences both on the criminal himself and on the ſpectators, we could not live. We do not merely adminiſter juſtice, but find it necessary to execute it in a cruel and relentless manner."

The beſt and richeſt and moſt magnificent thing to see in Babylonia is the market. Great quantities of goods are sold there which come from Greater India, especially pearls, precious ſtones, spices, perfumes, and sweet smelling things, silks, and linen goods. It is not possible to enumerate all the articles which are brought from India and diſtributed throughout the world, and here is the chief market for all those things which I have described. There are certain men who come and go through the ſtreets of Cairo carrying a kind of mirror faſtened to the breaſt. These are the barbers who shave the heads and the necks of the Moors, and they pass through the ſtreets, crying as they go. There are negroes also of about ten or twelve years of age who go about calling: "Who will be shaved?" These are those who serve the women in that which they are wont to cleanse secretly at the baths. For every requirement there are traders in the ſtreets enquiring if anyone has need of them. Even the cooks go up and down, carrying braziers, and fire, and dishes of ſtew for sale; others have plates of fruit, and innumerable men go to and fro selling water which they carry on camels and asses, or on their backs, since there are many people, and no water is to be had except from the river. The summer fruits are very mellow, and as the heat is then very great, so God has provided what is necessary. When the heat is overpowering there comes at times a very sharp breeze

which affects the eyes, and many people go about as if drunk, and find those fruits a great preventative. But otherwise the country is very healthy. The air, water, and meats are all good. The camels in those parts are very large and fine, but not swift. The asses, on the other hand, are the most gentle beasts of good appearance, and swift-footed, and they are well accoutred with bridles and saddles.

CHAPTER XII

Departure from Cairo.—Alexandria.—The voyage to Cyprus.—Nicosia.—A Rising.—The King's person.—Departure for Rhodes.—A narrow escape from the Turks.—A great storm.—Arrival at Rhodes.—Death of the Grand Master.—Election of his successor.

I REMAINED at Babylonia thirty days and then departed, taking leave of the Sultan and of Nicolo de' Conti, who gave me letters for Venice, and also of my host, the chief interpreter, and his wife and children, who had treated me as if I had been one of them. They gave me presents which I took with me, namely, two Indian cats, two parrots, perfumes and other things, including a turquoise which I still have. They gave me also victuals for my journey. I left Babylonia and travelled by the Lower Nile, and when I arrived at the place where the two arms parted, I left the right arm, which goes to Damietta, where I had already been, and came by the other to a place close to Alexandria, which they call Rosetta, and from there I reached the city of Alexandria. It is a very notable city and I remained there three days, wondering at the holy houses where St. Catherine was born and martyred. Here there is also a covered vault where, they say, is the wheel on which they put her. This city is a great sea port, and a great place of loading and unloading for the Christians, and when I had seen it thoroughly I went by land to Damietta, but I did not find there the ship which the King of Cyprus had given me. I had to wait there eight days until it arrived, for it had been sailing along the coast as far as Jerusalem.

I was received with much honour by the Governor of Damietta, to whom I carried letters from the Sultan's chief interpreter, and I sent to enquire if he had a

crocodile skin to send to the King of Cyprus who had asked for it. He offered me one which had recently been killed, but it smelt very rank, so that for my part I would rather have carried away the Governor's pretty daughter who was there, than the skin of that crocodile. I now set sail and in seven days I reached Paphos, where I had embarked, a most unhealthy place. The very day on which I arrived a bishop and two of his squires had died, and I gave God thanks that as soon as I set foot on land I was able to ride off on the beasts belonging to the dead bishop and his squires. I departed for the court of the King of Cyprus, at Nicosia, and the interpreter whom the King had given me went before to announce me to the King and the Cardinal. They sent to direct me to remain that night at an inn, as on the morning of the following day they desired to receive me with honours, and this they did. The next morning, going on my way, I met many gentlemen of the court of the King, who had come out to receive me, and they accompanied me into the King's presence,[1] and when I arrived I found the King and the Cardinal and many great men with them, and I was very well received, and treated with as much friendliness as if I had been born there, and they gave thanks to God that I had returned in safety after so long a voyage. They thanked me much on behalf of the King for what I had done in his service, and offered me whatever I desired. So I took my leave of the King, and the admiral who was there took me to his dwelling as before, where I was very well lodged.

The next day, in the morning, there was a great uproar among the people, and everyone flew to arms, including the Cardinal and the Lady Ines, his sister, and many of the great men of the Kingdom, against the King, intending to kill or take captive a favourite of his, named Jacobo Guiri, who held the office of judge. The King fled to a fortress at one end of the

city, which they call the Citadel, but they surrounded it and demanded that he should banish the favourite from the court, and forbid him to return for a year. The King swore it, and it was accomplished forthwith, and the people went to their homes. On the following day the King sent for me, and in the presence of the Cardinal and certain nobles, asked me to take of him what I pleased for the cost of my journey. I replied that I was much beholden to him, but that I had sufficient for my return, and I requested him to order that they should give me a safe-conduct and a ship to carry me to Rhodes, and I laboured to depart and he to detain me. He desired me to stay at least eight days, and since I saw that it would please him I had to consent. During those days, while I refreshed myself, a ship was prepared to carry me, and I took leave of the King (and of a truth he gave me licence with bad grace), and he gave me his device, which I still have, and ten pieces of camlet, and fine linen, as well as a leopard, and such profusions of victuals for my journey to Rhodes that they sufficed for a year. While I was there two ambassadors came to the King, the one from the Duke of Savoy and the other from a Duke of Germany, each one to offer him his daughter in marriage. I did not hear the conclusion arrived at with either of them, but it was said that another marriage was projected, and was being anxiously pressed, by the Master of Rhodes on behalf of a daughter of the Count of Urguel of Aragona, sister of the wife of the Infante Don Pedro, Regent of Portugal. It appeared to me that the project which the King's council most favoured was the marriage with the daughter of the Duke of Savoy, and I believe that this was the one that succeeded.[2]

The King is a youth of sixteen or seventeen years of age, of great stature. His legs are so fat that they are almost the same size at the garter as at the

thigh. He is a gracious man and, considering his age, of excellent understanding. He is very gay and apt with his body, especially in horsemanship. Without doubt, if his country were not so unhealthy, I should have been glad to place myself at his service for a time, but it is almost impossible for a stranger to live in such a wretched country, and on that account, and because I had to return to Castile for the Moorish war, I was obliged to continue my journey as speedily as I might.

I departed from the city of Nicosia, and came to Cerina where a ship was waiting to carry me to Rhodes. Cerina is an ancient city founded by Achilles, and from him it takes its name. It is small, but strong and well walled, and has a good harbour, although not large. This is closed with a chain and is well guarded. It was to this place that the King escaped with the Cardinal, his uncle, and the Lady Ines, and many others of the Kingdom when King Janus was captured.[3] It is the healthiest place of any in Cyprus since it is exposed to the west wind. There I found a trading ship which the King had ordered to be prepared for me, which was to carry me to Rhodes, and another with it carrying merchandise. We left the harbour and came to the extremity of Cape Pifani at about noon. We then sailed out to sea by the Gulf of Satalia, on the way to Turkey, but before two o'clock we saw a Turkish galley coming towards us with intent to take and destroy us, in revenge for a ship of theirs which the Catalans had taken outside the harbour of Cyprus. We strove with sail and oars, and they likewise, so that there was no flagging of the litany while our hands grew weary with rowing. I had with me a boatswain of a Catalan galley who had killed a nephew of the captain. He had been sentenced to be hanged from the yard-arm, but the rope had broken with his weight, and I besought the captain to give him to me, since God had done so much for him, and he consented, and this

was the means of our escape, for he was a skilled navigator. He lightened the boat so that it could make better headway, but the other ship with the merchandise would not jettison the cargo, and when it was late and the sun was setting the Turks overtook it, and sank it, and drowned every man of the crew. In the confusion which ensued we had time to increase our distance a little, and when it began to grow dark we put on as much sail as we could, and all took to the oars, and labouring as best we could, when night fell, we reefed the sail and turned to the right hand, rowing quietly so that there should be no sound from the oars, and the galley passed close to us without seeing us. The boatswain said that we must alter our course, as the galley would hug the land and wait for us, believing that, as our ship was small, they had us in their hands. We therefore made for the open sea, and saw the galley approach the land, and at midnight the south wind rose, and every wave swept us fore and aft. How much rather would I have fallen into the hands of the Turks than be drowned at sea! They wanted me to throw one of my men overboard, but we defended ourselves stoutly. Driving before the storm, we ran towards Castelrosso and reached there at three o'clock, and found that the galley had left scarcely two hours earlier. We landed there in a good harbour, and climbed to the fortress and rested, as became us after having escaped so great a peril. This castle belongs to the Knights of Rhodes, and is part of the province of Armenia, although an island. It is very rocky and no beast can climb it. Below, at the entrance to the harbour, are certain salt mines which are a source of great revenue to the Knights of Rhodes.

We departed from the island of Castelrosso and took the course to Rhodes, in constant fear of that galley. We had also foul weather, but in two days we arrived and entered the harbour, and I went to lodge with

Brother Nuño de Cabrera, an excellent knight, born in Castile, and a Knight of the Order, and among all those there he was the wealthiest and most renowned, and he received me most cheerfully and affectionately. He treated me very benevolently, and had it not been for the company he bore me, I think I should have died after the hardships I had suffered. Even in my own house I could not have been more piously nor better served. On the second day after my arrival I went to see the Grand Master,[4] and gave him certain letters from the King of Cyprus, which he had entrusted to me concerning his affairs, and Brother Nuño de Cabrera accompanied me with other Castilian knights, and knights of different nations, particularly the French, who are much attached to our people. When I arrived I found the Master grievously ill with pains in his liver, but he soon dispatched the answers to the King of Cyprus, and I took my leave and returned to my lodging. That night he died of his sickness. While he was in the extremity of death there came, according to custom, the Commanders, the confessors, and certain knights of the Council, and asked him upon his oath, and from his conscience, that he should name the one whom he wished to succeed him as Grand Master of the Order, and that he should write it and seal it with his seal, so that it should remain a secret. They then took his writing and put it in safe keeping so that none should know of it, except the confessor. If the Master dies it is their custom to open the sealed paper, and at the time of the election of his successor the vote of the dead Master counts, it is said, for two.

This Master was buried on the day of his death at the hour of Mass, and his funeral offices were fitting to his person. The heads of the Order bore him on their shoulders on his bier, covered with a black pall, with a great train before and behind, which those that

could not reach the bier held in their hands. He was dressed in his habit, with his sword, and with his spurs on his feet and a rosary in his hand; and thus they buried him. They then ordered all the gates to be closed, and me they placed in a room which they locked from without, and gave me food to eat, but my people they sent into the city, and so, clad in their habits, with their swords girt on, as is their custom, they entered the church to elect the new Master, which is done, they say, in this wise.

From each nation of those who belong to the Order they take three persons, a knight, a chaplain and a lay or serving brother. These are selected by all present, and first they make everyone confess and communicate and swear on the holy relics, which they have there, that each will well and truly make his choice. Those that are chosen also swear that they will in their turn select well and truly, and these persons choose thirteen. These thirteen, upon a like oath, elect seven, and each one of these seven, having also been sworn, and without speaking to his fellows, records his vote in a closed writing, placing it on a table before that confessor who, as I have said, holds the vote of the deceased Master. This is done in the presence of all the knights, and the confessor, having the votes of the seven and of the Master, reads them there, the Master's vote, as I have said, counting for two, and he that has the most votes becomes the Master. They remained there all that day and the night following until dawn, and all believed, and even said, that a Grand Commander who was there would be the Master, and that there was no need to have an election, so certain was he to be chosen. An hour before dawn there was a great clamour heard, as well in the church as throughout the city, with ringing of bells and blowing of trumpets, and they fetched me from my room, where I had been locked up, and carried me to the church, and,

all being in procession, they made me carry the pennon of the Order to the great Altar, and he who had the votes cried out: "Give thanks to God, your Master is the Prior of Auvergne."[5] And many, although it was still night, could be seen to turn yellow with envy.

This having been accomplished, they all came out, and it was now day. We then went to the hospital, and they opened the doors, and we went outside into the city with all the people, and placed the pennon upon the tower of the harbour. The new Master was an ancient knight who had well served his Order, and a man of much virtue. The following day they took counsel and ordered that he should be fetched, and they armed four galleys and departed at once for Auvergne, where he was Prior. It would, indeed, be strange if there were any mischance in such an election, for they leave no scope for partiality nor friendship nor enmity. The Order is very noble and large, and great men are always forthcoming for its defence. This in truth is necessary, seeing that they have for neighbours, on the one hand, the Grand Turk, and on the other, the Sultan of Egypt; and in the valour of its defenders lies the safety of the Order.

CHAPTER XIII

Voyage to Constantinople.—Shipwreck.—Tafur is almost drowned.—A fight between Catalans and Genoese.—Two embassies arrive for the Emperor of the East.—Chios.—Troy.—The Dardanelles.—Pera.

THERE was a ship from Ancona at Rhodes, and I contracted with the captain to carry me to Constantinople, and we sailed and came to the island of Samos, which is in the Archipelago, leaving on the right hand the castle of S. Pedro, which is on the mainland of Turkey, and on the left, the island of Cos, which belongs to the Order of Rhodes. We continued our course towards Chios, where we came upon a ship of that place, and they told us that the ships and galleys, which had come from the Council to take the Emperor of Greece to Europe, were anchored in the harbour of Chios, and we set sail and passed, leaving the island on the left, but the wind did not favour us, and when it failed we had to anchor beside the island and remain there that night. The next morning we saw approaching us two great galleys, and two lighter ones, and they came alongside and ordered us to return to Chios, otherwise they would fight us, and we had to do this, as we could not resist them. This was so that we should not know what they were about, for the Genoese had taken those galleys and armed them, intending to go to the harbour of Alexandria, and to capture two Catalan galleys, the *En-Casa-Sages*, and the *En Sirviente*, which were there. We were forced to return with the galleys and to anchor in the harbour, and we remained there all day. At midnight a great storm arose, and as we were insecurely grappled, our anchor broke away and caught a carack, which had been burnt

and sunk in ancient times during the war between the Venetians and the Genoese, the bows of which remained above the water, and our ship ſtruck it, and it ſtove us in and we sank, and it was then day. The sailors, in great peril from the sea which was very high, reached shore with difficulty, but as for me, when the ship sank, I was left in the water clinging to a piece of wreckage. Certain gentlemen who were there, Messer Nicolao de Meton, captain general, and some bishops and French gentlemen, gave orders to rescue me, but none dared venture. Then some Biscayans took a skiff from a galley, and came out to me and carried me to shore, but I was almoſt exhauſted by the water and the cold, for it was Chriſtmas. I found there the Bishop of Viseo in Portugal[1], and he took me with him and attended to my needs. There the French gentlemen heard from me of the death of the Grand Maſter of Rhodes, and certain Knights of the Order arrived, and with them the Commander of Pulaque, and when the ſtorm abated he was carried to Rhodes in a galley, and was made Marshal of Rhodes. He was that one who brought the Bull[2] to Caſtile, and then he had loſt one eye, but not when I now saw him, and he was a very good knight and a man of great renown.

We remained there in Chios until the galleys went out againſt the Catalans, and it was on this wise. When they arrived at the harbour of Alexandria they found the Catalans there, and when the Catalans saw them they ran one of the galleys aground, and the larger galley, which was very powerful, took up the men, and they fought all that day and night, and the Moors looked on. At dawn a land wind arose, and the Catalans sailed out to sea, but the Genoese did not dare to follow, since on the open sea, with a fair wind, they would have had the worſt of it, and leaving the other ships well guarded, the Catalans sailed for Rhodes, and

the Genoese returned to Chios, where we remained. Having dragged our ship ashore, we refitted it, but the bulk of the merchandise was lost, and I also lost many things which I had brought from the East. The ambassadors took their ships and left the harbour and came to the Council, and disembarked at Nice in Provence. This embassy was the one which had come to the Emperor of Greece, to obtain his agreement with the Council. It was a very rich and magnificent embassy, composed of well-selected men. But when the Venetians heard of it, and saw the great prejudice which was being stirred up against Pope Eugenius, who was a native of that city, they sent out another embassy to the Emperor, and the two met at Constantinople, and there was a great dispute as to who should bring the Emperor, and they armed themselves to fight. Thereupon the Emperor let it be known that he would go with neither embassy, but that he intended to go with his own ships, and he asked them to depart and not to hinder his passage, and they had to agree. Those of the Council came to Chios, as I have related, and the Venetians made as if to enter the Black Sea. Nevertheless, an agreement was come to between them and the Emperor, and when the others had departed they returned, and took the Emperor within a few days, and carried him to Italy to the port of Venice.[3]

I remained in this island of Chios for twenty days and had nothing to do. I then departed for Turkey, which is only a short distance away, to a place called Foja-Vecchia, which, they say, is one of the ports of Turkey, where there is a Genoese settlement, and I found there a friend of mine whom I had known in Seville, and I asked him, since he had some influence with the Turks, to send one of his people with me to Troy, and to hire horses for me, which he did. I travelled by land for two days to that place which they say was Troy, but found no one who could give me any

information concerning it, and we came to Ilium, as they call it. This place is situated on the sea opposite the harbour of Tenedos. The whole of this country is strewn with villages, and the Turks regard the ancient buildings as relics and do not destroy anything, but they build their houses adjoining. That which made me understand that this was, indeed, ancient Troy, was the sight of such great ruined buildings, and so many marbles and stones, and that shore, and the harbour of Tenedos over against it, and a great hill which seemed to have been made by the fall of some huge building. But I could learn nothing further, and returned to Chios. Here I found my ship refitted, and in two days we set sail. The island of Chios yields much gum, and has been populated by the Genoese, who took it from the Greeks, and the rulers call themselves Mayoneses,[4] and since they cannot defend the place, they pay tribute to the Genoese who raise their standard there. The Genoese have need of that island for their voyages to the Levant and the Dardanelles.

We departed and put out to sea, and a great tempest arose which damaged the ship, but the sailors, being very skilled in that art, repaired the damage as best they could, and, leaving on the left hand the island of Mytilene, which also belongs to the Genoese, we doubled the Cape of S. Maria and came to the island of Tenedos, where we anchored and disembarked. While the ship was being refitted we set out to see the island, which is some eight or ten miles about. There are many conies, and it is covered with vineyards, but they are all spoilt. The harbour of Tenedos looks so new that it might have been built to-day by a master-hand. The mole is made of great stones and columns, and here the ships have their moorings and excellent anchorage. There are other places where ships can anchor, but this is the best, since it is opposite the entrance to the Straits of Romania [Dardanelles]. Above

the harbour is a great hill surmounted by a very strong castle. This castle was the cause of much fighting between the Venetians and Genoese until the Pope sentenced it to be destroyed, that it might belong to neither. But, without doubt, this was very ill-advised, since the harbour is one of the best in the world. No ship can enter the Straits without first anchoring there to find the entrance, which is very narrow, and the Turks, knowing how many ships touch there, arm themselves and lie in wait and kill many Christians. From there one sees many buildings of Troy, and certain Greeks who live there can even give some account of the place.

The next day we departed, and sailing on we entered the Straits, which are very narrow. On the Turkish side the water is very shallow. These Straits are called the Dardanelles, and here was the door and harbour of Troy. On the side towards Greece the water is very deep. Here stands the tower of Vituperio where Achilles was found with Patroclus, or so they say that wish it so. In this place the Straits are so narrow that on a clear day one can see a standard raised on the other side. So, passing through these Straits, and leaving certain villages on the Turkish side and on the Greek side, we reached the city of Gallipoli, a notable place, and a good harbour with an excellent castle. This was the first place taken by the Turks when they passed over into Greece, and they left the wall and castle standing, which they did not do elsewhere, so that if they chanced to be defeated they could be succoured from there.

We departed from Gallipoli and came to the Sea of Marmora, which is an inland circular sea of about eight leagues across, and they call it Marmora, because from it came all the marble for Constantinople, as well for the walls as for the city, and it belongs to the Greeks. From there we came to a town called Eregli, and to

another called Silumbria, which two places the Turks allowed the Emperor to retain in times past out of courtesy and for his support. Departing from there, the next day at dawn, we saw a very high mountain, more than a hundred miles off, and they told us that it was St. Sophia, which is in Constantinople, and we came to a place about two miles from the city where we remained that night The next morning I sent the boat to the city of Pera, to give news of my coming to the captain of a ship, called Juan Caro, a native of Seville, who was my good friend and whom I knew to be there. He came out with his friends in their boats to greet me. I desired to go at once to make my reverence to the Emperor, but they importuned me so much, saying that I should disgrace them if I did not go first to Pera where they had their houses, that I had to comply. I and my companions entered the boats of the Castilians, and our ship came with us, and we entered the harbour of Constantinople, and we then left it and went on and anchored at the quay of Pera,[5] which is one of the finest in the world. Any ship, however great, can lie in clear, deep water with its bowsprit on land, so that better anchorage could not be had. I landed in company with the Castilians, and with other friends of theirs of divers nations, and we went to the church to pray. There I found the *podestà* who governs the place, and he received me very kindly, asking for news of the West, and protesting that whatever I had need of should be supplied at once, and so we parted. I took lodgings with the Castilian captain where I had, indeed, an excellent reception, and when I arrived I found a great present of wine and fowl, which the *podestà* had sent me. The following day the Castilians who were in Constantinople and Pera came to see me, and I recognized some whom I had seen in Castile, among them Alfon de Mata, squire to Don Juan, our Master, whom God protect.

He begged me to present him to the Emperor of Trebizond, because he had come with the ambassadors of the Council, and was now ruined, and I did speak to the Emperor,[6] although he was himself equally ruined, having been exiled from his country with the Empress of Constantinople, his sister, and he received him into his service, and gave me the same day a bow and arrows which I still have.

CHAPTER XIV

Constantinople.—The Emperor John Palaeologus.—Tafur's family tree.—The story of the Fourth Crusade.—Tafur's reception at Court.—Departure of the Emperor for Europe.

After two days, during which time I rested myself, I went to make my reverence to the Emperor of Constantinople, and all the Castilians accompanied me. I arrayed myself as best I could, putting on the Order of the Escama,[1] which is the device of King Juan, and I sent for one of the Emperor's interpreters, called Juan of Seville, a Castilian by birth, and they say that the Emperor chose him to be interpreter because he sang him Castilian romances to the lute. He came with me to the Palace, and went in to advise the Emperor that I was there to make my reverence, and they made me wait an hour while the Emperor sent for certain knights and prepared himself. I then entered the Palace, and came to a hall where I found him seated on a tribune, with a lion's skin spread under his feet.[2] I made my reverence there, and told the Emperor that I had come to see his person and estate, and to take knowledge of his lands and lordships, but principally to learn the truth concerning my lineage, which I had been told had sprung from that place, and from his Imperial blood, and I commenced to tell him the manner in which this was said to have come about. He replied at once that I was very welcome, and that he was greatly pleased to see me, and as to that which I spoke of he would order the ancient records to be searched, so that the truth of everything might be ascertained. He asked me for news of the Christian lands and princes, especially concerning the King of Spain, my Master, and of his estate and his war with

the Moors, and I replied to everything to the best of my knowledge, and so took leave of him and went to my lodging. The next day he sent for me to ask me to go hunting, and he sent horses for me and mine, and I went with him, and with the Empress, his consort, who was there, and that day he told me that he was now acquainted with the matters about which I enquired, and that on his return he would order me to be exactly informed concerning them, and I thanked him. When we returned, about Vesper time, after we had dismounted, he sent to summon before him those whom he had instructed to make search concerning my enquiries, and it was on this wise.

They say that formerly (I do not remember the actual time) an Emperor of Constantinople sent throughout his lands to order that the nobles should pay taxes and render service and make contributions, in the same way as the villeins. The nobles, in view of so great an abuse of their charters, spoke with his eldest son and heir, and persuaded him to take their part and to reason with the Emperor, his father, that he should refrain from leaving so bad a name behind him, for his proposals were against order and justice, and could only force the nobles to take up arms against him, which could not be avoided if he persisted in his evil purposes. The prince accepted the charge of the nobles, and promised to do all in his power, and he spoke to the Emperor, his father, and begged him, of his grace, not to do this against the nobles of his country, since it was due to them that he was ruler, and that they sustained and honoured him; further, that if he opposed them he would involve his country in great peril and labour, and that he would find that he could not enforce his will on them. When the Emperor heard this he was very incensed against the prince, his son, and banished him from his court, and he betook himself, as they say, to the city of Adrianople, which is to-day

the headquarters and court of the Grand Turk. When he arrived there the noise of it went throughout the Empire, and presently there was a general rising of the nobles and their adherents, and they gathered together and took the prince, and came with a great hoſt to Conſtantinople where the Emperor was, a journey of about five days. The Emperor, when he knew of this, went out and encamped with all his commons, and they were thus arrayed one againſt the other. The prince sent once again to beseech his father that he should refrain from causing such great injury and ruin, since otherwise he would have to fight with him. But the Emperor was much more incensed than before, saying that matters muſt now proceed, and that he would make the prince and all those with him pay with their lives. When the prince saw this, and that a conteſt was imminent, he made an agreement with his father that the Emperor should withdraw to Conſtantinople, and that he should return to Adrianople, and that they should then come to terms. The prince did all this in order to avoid fighting with his father. And it fell out so, and each returned to his place.

Now when the prince saw that the queſtion could not be settled without fighting, he approached one of the princes, his brother, and recommended the people to him, and he commended him to the people, and said that God would never suffer him to fight with his father, nor even to live in a country where such a thing was possible, and he departed and came to Spain, and arrived in Caſtile at the time when Don Alfonso was reigning, who conquered Toledo, and whom some call Alfonso of the Pierced Hand. Here the prince was known as Count Don Pedro, and was father of Don Eſtevan Yllan. The Greek nobles, when they found themselves bereft of such a captain, for he was a valiant knight, as he had proved himself by many feats of arms, both before and after he came to Spain,

took the younger brother, although he was but a youth, and kissed his hand, and called him Emperor of Greece, and set out with him from Adrianople with all their men-at-arms. They came up against Constantinople, with intent to place this youth on the Imperial throne, and the Emperor, when he was advised of it, did as before and marched out of the city against him, and there was no course but to fight. The Emperor was vanquished and captured, and great numbers of his people were slain and taken, and the nobles entered the city as great victors and placed the young prince, their captain, whom they had brought with them, on the Emperor's throne. They set a strong guard about the person of his father, and after a few days' illness he died, and the prince remained in peaceful possession of the Empire. He repealed the laws which his father had made, and made others more favourable to the nobles than before, and for this cause they say that there is not so much liberty for nobles in any part of the world as in Greece. Nor are the villeins anywhere so much in subjection, since they are in fact slaves to the nobility. But, to-day, for the sins of Christians, both nobles and villeins are afflicted with a grievous servitude, since their lords are the Turks, the enemies of the Faith.

The other prince, when he came to Castile, was very well received and much honoured by the King, and they say that the King was preparing to make war on the Moors, and he married the prince to one of his own legitimate sisters, and left him to govern the Kingdom while he went to the war. He is said to have been a very noble knight, vigorous, frank, and very discreet. They called him Don Peryllan, and he it was, they say, who entered Toledo and set up the King there. Moreover, when the city revolted he recovered it for him, fighting against the rebels and overcoming them. For this cause, and as recompense

for this deed, they say that all those privileges were granted to him, which the citizens of Toledo enjoy to this day. He is buried in the chapel of the ancient kings in Toledo, and high up in the roof he is painted on horseback with his standard and arms, the which are the same as those now borne by the most virtuous and bounteous Don Fernant Alvarez de Toledo, Count of Alva, for he is descended in the direct line from that prince of Greece who came to Castile. I also carry those arms, for I come also of that line, and that Don Pero Ruyz Tafur, who was prominent in the taking of Cordova, was a grandson of Count Don Estevan Yllan, the son or grandson of Don Peryllan, the prince of whom I am speaking. It would be fitting, but for prolonging this writing, to relate from the history of Castile, how many of them from father to son are descended from that line until now. And if I carry bars on my escutcheon, it is because by marriages the descent has become confused, but the true arms are checky.

When I was acquainted with all this, I enquired of the Emperor why he did not carry those arms which it was formerly the custom for the Emperors to wear, that is the arms of my family, and he told me that some hundred or hundred and fifty years ago, or more, the Venetians prepared a great fleet,[3] saying that it was for the assistance of the Emperor against the Turks, and they came with the fleet to Constantinople, and were very well received by the Emperor and all the Greeks, and they lodged everywhere in the city. But it appears that they had already plotted what they put in practice, for they rose with the citizens against the Emperor, and fought with him, and since he was wholly unprepared for such treason, they succeeded in driving him out of the city, and many were slain. He fled to Morea, which was called formerly Achaia, a principality of the heirs of the Empire, and the Venetians

occupied the city and remained there for fully seventy years, and they carried away many holy relics, which are now in Venice, the bodies of St. Helena and St. Marina, and many other relics. They despoiled a number of magnificent buildings, and carried off two great columns which they set up, with their Patron Saint upon them, on the sea-shore. They are as high as towers and so well preserved that it is difficult to believe they could ever have been moved.[4] Above the door of St. Mark's are four very great horses of brass, thickly gilt with fine gold. There are also jaspers and marbles and other things, all of which they carried off from Constantinople during the time of their dominion. They were even on the point of transferring the government from Venice to Constantinople, but desisted on the advice of an elder, who said that they ought never to leave the city from which they had conquered all the others. While the Venetians held Constantinople the Emperor died,[5] as well as his son, and there remained only a grandson, who married a daughter of the King of Hungary and became a worthy knight. He agreed with the people of Constantinople and the surrounding country that on a given day they should all rise, and he would be ready with as great a force as he could muster, and would succour the city, and when it was taken all should be his, and it was so.

On the appointed day the people rose against the Venetians, and shut them up in one part of the city so that they could not reach the ships, and they sent for that prince, who entered the city, and killed and captured all the Venetians, and sat himself on the Imperial throne, and the people kissed his hand and acknowledged him as their ruler. They took much spoil from the Venetians and much money by way of ransom, and he held dominion in peace. Now they say that this Emperor, who thus recovered the Empire and held

it, could never be prevailed upon to relinquish the arms which he formerly bore, which were and are two links joined, and to assume the Imperial arms, which belong to the throne. But he replied always that he had won the Empire bearing those arms, and nothing would induce him to part with them, and so it is to this day. Nevertheless, the old arms, which are checky, can still be seen on the towers and buildings and the churches of the city, and when the people put up their own buildings they still place the old arms upon them. I insisted, as best I could, that the Emperors should still wear those arms since they are the real arms of the Empire. Further, that it is the office which gives the authority, and not the person who restored it, especially since the people recovered the city and made him their lord. To this the Emperor replied that the matter was still being debated between himself and the people. I, having been informed of all this, told the Emperor what had happened in Spain, and he told me what had happened there. This was all I could learn of the affair of the arms, and of the manner in which it came about.

From that time onwards the Emperor treated me with great affection and as a kinsman, and he desired greatly that I should remain in his country and marry there and settle down, and I had some thoughts of doing so in view of what I have related, for the city is badly populated and there is need of good soldiers, which is no wonder since the Greeks have such powerful nations to contend with. I found in the city many Castilians and persons of other Latin nations in the Emperor's service, and while I was there they showed me great honour and esteem. That day a knight of the household who was there invited me to dinner on the following day, and I accepted. After Mass I went to his house, where he was awaiting me, and I dined with him, and he showed me his wife and children,

treating me in a very friendly manner. After dinner he sent everyone away and went to his room and put on his collar of the Order of Escama, the device of our King and Master, and he came to me and said in the Castilian tongue: "Sir knight, you are right welcome. See here is my house with all that is in it at your disposal, as if for my own brother, because I have received great honour and many benefits from your King, and from the knights of your country much hospitality, and if I have not spoken to you until now in your own tongue in public, it is because we hold it for a disgrace at any time to give up our own language and speak a strange one. Nevertheless, for the great love which I have for your nation, and for you, from henceforth when we are alone I will bear myself in all things as a Castilian, like yourself." From that hour I received much honour from this knight, and he brought one of his sisters to me, a very beautiful woman, saying that while I was there I should serve her as a friend, and he commended me to her. Indeed, I believe he desired me to marry her. From this lady I received many things, especially two pavilions which I took to Castile. The one I gave to the King, and the other I still have.

This day the Emperor sent for me to go hunting, and we killed many hares, and partridges, and francolins, and pheasants, which are very plentiful there, and when we returned to the Palace I took my leave and went to my lodging, where he had ordered that I should be provided with whatever I had need of. Without doubt, it was the Emperor's wish to show me much honour and favour, and from that day onwards, when he or the Empress, his consort, desired to hunt, he sent horses for me, and I went with them, and they said that they had great pleasure in my company. After fifteen days of my visit had passed, the Emperor had to depart in the Venetian galleys to meet the Pope, and

he begged me repeatedly to accompany him, which I should have done had I not been forced to excuse myself on the plea that I was obliged first to see Greece, Turkey, and also Tartary. When the Emperor saw that he could not persuade me, he commended me to the Empress, his wife, and to Dragas,[6] his brother, who was heir to the Imperial throne—that one whom the Turks have since killed—and he departed in great splendour. There went with him two of his brothers, and 800 men, all noblemen of high rank. On the day of his going[7] there was a great celebration, and everyone went in procession with the members of the Religious Orders to the place of embarkation, and a great company went one day's journey out to sea with the fleet, and I went also. I then took my leave and returned to Constantinople, but the Emperor gave me licence very unwillingly, saying that if I had had my people with me he would not have let me go. So I left him, he commanding me to visit him before returning to my country, which I promised and later performed.

CHAPTER XV

Adrianople.—Description of the Grand Turk.—The Black Sea.—Arrival at Trebizond.

HAVING returned to Constantinople, I asked leave of the Despot Dragas, who now represented the Emperor, to go to Adrianople, the greatest city in Greece except Constantinople, where the Turks had their armies. The Despot sent for certain Genoese merchants who were there, and directed that they should arrange for me to see the Grand Turk, his state and person, and return without danger. It happened that a brother of one of those merchants had arrived, who was very acceptable to the Despot and was much trusted by him, and this merchant agreed, in order to serve the Despot, to carry me with him and show me everything. We departed in three days, taking the road to Greece, and passing certain small places which need not be described here, until we arrived at Adrianople, a nine days' journey. Here I lodged with the Genoese who had his house in the city. The Grand Turk[1] sent for me to enquire when and how the Emperor had departed, and in what state, and in whose ships, and accordingly, while telling him these things, I saw his person and household and people. He must be about 45 years of age, of good stature, and handsome of feature. He seemed from his bearing to be a discreet person, grave in his looks, and he was so handsomely attended that I never saw the like, for he had with him all his forces, which amount to 600,000 horsemen, and, lest it should appear that I am exaggerating, I refer to those who gave me the information. In good faith, I am afraid to repeat all that was told me. There is not a pedestrian in the whole country, but all go on horseback, on very small and lank horses.

The Grand Turk and his people are always in the field in tents, both in winter and summer, and although the city is close at hand, he never enters it unless it is to go with his women to the bath, which thing, with the help of the Genoese, I was enabled to see. He went thither with drums and music and buffoons singing, and a great crowd of women, who, they said, were his body-women, to the number of 300 and more. Thus, with great noise and shouting they entered the city and remained there until midnight, when the Grand Turk returned to his tents. The next day he went hunting, and the Genoese arranged for me to go as well. There were many people on horseback with falcons, goshawks, and leopards, and all the hunting accoutrements. The Turks have the custom to carry in the saddle an iron staff, and a tambourine with their bows and quivers. This is the whole of their fighting outfit, and since the country is cold and often frozen, and the horses fall easily, the men wear boots of Damascine leather up to the knees, which are very hard, and to which the spurs are fixed. These they wear always, and if the horse falls they can free their legs without receiving any injury, and the boot remains in the stirrup. There are many pheasants and francolins, and every kind of bird which is in Spain. The men are clad in the manner of the country, with long cloaks and mantles of the same material, which are open in front. These are made of fine woollen cloth, and of silk and brocades from Italy. But what surprised me more than anything else was the display of furs: martins, sable, and less valuable skins, ermine, with the teeth, and fox, which latter they value very highly, as well for its quality as also for its softness, and because it is very warm and suitable for such a cold country. Many wear linen on their heads, others hats made like those worn at rustic merry-makings in Burgos. Their saddles are like asses' saddles, but

very rich and covered with fine cloths, and their stirrups are rather short than long.

That day we returned to the city, and my companion took me about the camp, looking at the quarters of the knights and the other people. There, as in their own houses, they keep all that is necessary for their comfort, their women, and everything besides. The tents are excellent, with good personal accommodation, but nevertheless the people endure much hardship, and long usage has so accustomed them to it that they do not show any aversion. The horses are always kept in the open without any shelter, and I believe that, although they are lank and small by nature, the way in which they are neglected makes them work still less, and, indeed, it seems at times as if they could scarcely carry their masters. Although the number of their horses is difficult of credit, yet considering how many beasts there are in Castile, hacks in Galicia and in the mountains, he mules, she mules and asses, I think our country could show as many. I would as lief ride to war or to tourney on one of our asses as on any of their horses.

The Turks have a vast dominion, but the country is very sterile and sparsely populated and mountainous. Greece, which they occupy, is a flat and fruitful land, although now it is depopulated by war, for the Greeks bear the whole burden of the struggle, and the Turks are ruthless and treat them with great cruelty. Indeed, it is difficult to believe how so great an army can be provisioned. The Turks are a noble people, much given to truth. They live in their country like nobles, as well in their expenditure as in their actions and food and sports, in which latter there is much gambling. They are very merry and benevolent, and of good conversation, so much so that in those parts, when one speaks of virtue, it is sufficient to say that anyone is like a Turk. Having seen the person, household and estate of the Grand Turk, I told my companion that it

would be well to return to Constantinople, but we were forced to remain for two days more on account of some business which he had to complete with certain merchants of the Grand Turk's household. On one of those days the Grand Turk went out to hunt, and I went with him to see the assembly, which was the greatest I had ever beheld, in point of numbers and horses, and general display. The men were very well and richly clad, according to their fashion, but such linings I never saw in my life, neither so many nor so rich.

The following day we departed and returned to Constantinople by that road by which we had come, and the Despot Dragas showed much pleasure at seeing me, and thanked the Genoese heartily for the care he had taken of me. I remained in the city eight days, resting myself, and while there I begged the Despot that he would be graciously pleased to speak with the captain of a ship there, saying that I desired to pass over the Black Sea to go to Kaffa, which is a city of the Genoese, close to the Sea of Azov. The Despot sent at once for the captain, and asked him to carry me with him and show me honour, and he promised it. And captain Juan Caro, the Castilian, my friend, spoke also with one of the Genoese, and, to oblige him further, he carried in his ship certain merchandise to Chios and Rhodes. This same Castilian gave me also victuals for the voyage. We then prepared ourselves and set sail, and came by the Bosphorus, which stretches from Constantinople to the mouth of the Black Sea, a distance of eighteen miles. Entering the Black Sea we bore to the right hand towards Turkey, passing many places, until we reached a castle called Sinope, which belongs to the Genoese in Turkey. There we anchored and remained two days, discharging merchandise, and loading other goods. In these parts the Turks cut the wood from

which they make very strong cross-bows, and they bury them on the sea-shore for fear of the heavy punishment which would be inflicted if they were caught selling them to the Christians, and when they see ships passing they dig them up and sell them.

We departed from Sinope and coasted along the shore of the Black Sea as far as Trebizond, which was called Samothrace of old. The Emperor there is a Christian and a Greek, and they say that the father of the present Emperor, in order to disinherit his elder brother, approached the Grand Turk, asking him to support him, and he killed his father, and he had two sons and the younger son killed his father, whereby the words of the Evangelist were fulfilled: *For with the same measure that ye mete withal it shall be measured to you again.* The elder brother was he whom I had seen in Constantinople, living in exile with his sister, the Greek Empress, and they say that his relations with her are dishonest.

CHAPTER XVI

Trebizond.—The Usurper.—Kaffa.—The slave-market.—Tafur purchases three slaves.—The Don.—The trade in caviare.—The Grand Khan.—The Tartars.

Trebizond has about 4000 inhabitants. It is well walled, and they say that the ground is fruitful and that it produces a large revenue. We landed and went to see the Emperor,[1] who enquired of me concerning the Emperor of Constantinople, in what manner he had departed for Italy, and what people he had taken with him, and he enquired also as to the Empress, his sister, and his brother, whom he had exiled. All this he did, because he desired to know from me whether it was true that his brother was betrothed to a daughter of the Lord of Mytilene, and that this lord and the Genoese and the Emperor had given him a great fleet to make war on Trebizond, and I assured him that this was so, whereupon he was much cast down and replied that he had sufficient to resist them all, and many more. He asked me much in order that he might know who I was and whither I was going, and he urged me to remain there, and promised, in order to satisfy me, that he would send me in one of his ships to see what I wished to see. I replied that I thanked him for desiring my company, but that I could not consent, since I had to accomplish my journey and be back in my own country within a certain time, as the King, my Master, was going to war with the Moors. Further, that if matters were otherwise I could not remain with him, for he was married to a daughter of a Turk, and that some harm would surely come to him from that. He replied that God would show him grace, because he had married her with intent to make her a Christian,

but I said: " My Lord, they say, rather, that they gave her to you so that she could turn you into a Moor, by reason of your expectations from her and the little that you have." He ordered me to be provided with what food I had need of and asked me to return there.

I then departed, and sailed for Kaffa,[2] which is part of the Empire of Tartary, but the city is held by the Genoese who have licence to inhabit there, only the Tartars did not think that they would settle there in such numbers. We anchored in the harbour and came to the inn where the captain had his lodging, and stayed there. The next day I went to see the monastery of St. Francis, which is a very pleasant house, and heard Mass, and later I went to see the *podestà* who received me very well. He asked me of what things I had need, and told me that he would gladly supply my wants, for he felt great love and duty towards our nation, since when he was in Seville he was excellently treated. I thanked him heartily, and before nightfall I went about the city admiring many things which were strange to me.

The city is very large, as large as Seville, or larger, with twice as many inhabitants, Christians and Catholics as well as Greeks, and all the nations of the world. They say that the Emperor of Tartary would have taken and destroyed it many times, except that the lords and common people of the surrounding countries would not consent to it, for they use the place for their evil doings and thefts, and their great wickedness, such as fathers selling their children, and brother selling brother. These things, and worse, are done there by all the nations of Persia, and when they leave the city they turn their faces to it, and drawing a bow they shoot an arrow against the wall, saying that they go thus absolved from the sins they have committed. They say, further, that the selling of children is no sin, for they are a fruit given by God for them to use for profit, and that God will show the children more

favour in the places whither they go than with their parents. In this city they sell more slaves, both male and female, than anywhere else in the world, and the Sultan of Egypt has his agents here, and they buy the slaves and send them to Cairo, and they are called Mamelukes. The Christians have a Bull from the Pope, authorizing them to buy and keep as slaves the Christians of other nations, to prevent their falling into the hands of the Moors and renouncing the Faith. These are Russians, Mingrelians, Caucasians, Circassians, Bulgarians, Armenians and divers other people of the Christian world. I bought there two female slaves and a male, whom I still have in Cordova with their children. The selling takes place as follows. The sellers make the slaves strip to the skin, males as well as females, and they put on them a cloak of felt, and the price is named. Afterwards they throw off their coverings, and make them walk up and down to show whether they have any bodily defect. The seller has to oblige himself, that if a slave dies of the pestilence within sixty days, he will return the price paid. When slaves of different nationalities are sold, if there is a Tartar man or woman among them, the price is a third more, since it may be taken as a certainty that no Tartar ever betrayed a master.

The city of Kaffa is indifferently walled and surrounded by a very small ditch, but it is well provided with cross-bows, bombards, cannon, muskets and culverins, and all manner of defensive artillery. They turn these even upon unarmed people although they have little wish to do them injury, since they derive great profit from them. A few days earlier those of the city marched out with troops and artillery trains to take the city of Corcate, which is the chief city of Tartary, but the Tartars were advised of it, and overcame the Genoese, and took their artillery and their colours, and killed and captured so many that the

Tartars thought that day to take Kaffa itself. They approached the walls and tried to scale them, but many were killed, and the Genoese there realized that their people were stronger by sea than by land.

Kaffa is bounded on the side towards Persia and India by land, and on the others by the Sea of Tana, the Sea of Ryxabaque and the Sea of Bacu.[3] They bring there much merchandise, spices, gold, pearls, and precious stones, and above all, from the countries round, come the furs of the whole world and at the cheapest rates. Certainly if it were not for the Genoese who are there, it would not appear that the people have any lot with us, since there are so many different nationalities, so many ways of dressing and eating, and such diversity in the usage of women. In the tavern where we lodged they brought us young virgins for a measure of wine, of which there is great scarcity, as also of all kinds of fruit and bread. These can all be had in the town, but there they are sold by the merchants at a high price, and for this reason thefts are common. The Tartars are a warlike people and they work much, both they and their horses, and they require little to sustain them. They say that when they are moving about, or at war, they carry their meat between the horse's side and the seat of the saddle,[4] and they do not cook it any more than it is cooked by that process. They make war on the neighbouring Christians, and take them and sell them in Kaffa, especially since the death of the lord of Vitoldo, who ruled over Lithuania and Russia, and was brother of the King of Poland, and he died without heirs. When the King of Poland succeeded to his lands, since they were far removed from Poland, the people did not desire him for ruler, and the country was divided up and thus lost. If the Tartars come under our rule as slaves, it is only because they are stolen or sold, as I have related, by their parents. So great is the multitude of men, and

of so many different nationalities, that it is a marvel that Kaffa is free from plague.

While I was there I went to see the Don,[5] a great river, and they say that this is the other stream which flows from the terrestrial paradise, and the Sea of Tana, the Sea of Ryxabaque and the Sea of Bacu are all fed by that water which comes from the Tanais, and runs through all Persia and Greater India, and, as with the Nile, the water carries much merchandise which enters the Black Sea close to Kaffa. On this coast are two castles, one belonging to the Genoese and the other to the Venetians, where they store much merchandise. In this river there are many fish which they load on ships, especially great quantities of sturgeon, which we call here *sollos*, a very good fish, both fresh and salted, and they can be met with in Castile and even in Flanders, whither they are carried. By this route the ambassadors of King Enrique travelled when they went to the court of Timur-Beg.[6] I was told by Don Alfonso Fernandez de Mesa that from there to the farthest point they reached was as far as from Kaffa to Castile, but that they went straight there and back and saw many strange things by the way, and at the court of Timur-Beg, as they assert. The river Don is a strange sight, as are also the people who dwell on its banks. They kill there certain fish which they call *merona*. These, they say, are very large, and they put the eggs into casks and carry them all over the world, especially to Greece and Turkey, and they call them caviare. The eggs look at first like black soap, and they take them when they are soft and they press them with a knife, as we do soap in our country, and put them into braziers, which makes them hard, and they look like the eggs of fish. This caviare is very salt. The women and the majority of the men wear the delicate silk of those parts, very elaborately worked, like the Moriscas here. The men wear felt cloaks, as fine

as cloth, which are pressed into shape and have no seams. Their arms are scimitars, bows and arrows, and clubs.

I did what I could to make plans to go to Tartary, but I was advised against it, since it would be unsafe to venture among people who are constantly moving and live without restraint, owing obedience to no ruler. I went, however, to see the city of Corcate, and from there I wished to see the great bazaar of the Grand Khan (that is lordo basar: lordo, a host, and basar, a square) which they call his court. And I informed myself as to it, and it is on this wise. There is a place like a great city where they have their market, as they call it, and there the Grand Cadir is stationed who is charged with governing the people. On the other side, on the left hand, is another place for the same purpose, and another Grand Cadir rules there. The houses are portable, some of linen, some of rods, and it happens at times that, because the soil is exhausted, they change their ground and settle in another district, and when they go they place all their goods in carts, and then set them down in the same order, as if they could not bring themselves to alter it. They eat no bread, which is not to be had, only a mixture of rice and camels' milk, and horse-flesh. They know nothing of wine, for they are of the Mohammedan religion. The Grand Khan is ruler over much country, but cities and towns are unknown. The people live always in the open country. Those who cannot find Christians with whom to fight, make war among themselves, and they steal when they can without fear of justice, for they do not regard it as wrong. They are commonly small in stature and broad-shouldered. Their foreheads are wide and their eyes are small. It is said that the most deformed are of the noblest birth. It is said also that when they meet the Turks they always have the better of them, and that the Turks, as a consequence, beat the Greeks, and the Greeks the Tartars.

But the Greeks are now altogether undone, for at this time Constantinople was the only fortified place they had left, and some still called them lord, but now all the Christian nations distributed throughout the world are serfs to the Moors, as the *mudejares* are with us, and are completely ruined and subject and scattered. The Turks have, indeed, avenged the taking of Troy. Even before I arrived, and before Constantinople had been taken, the Greeks were as subject as they now are, and if the Turks did not lay hands upon the city, it was for fear of the Christian peoples of the West, lest they should take up arms. But it well appears from the great neglect of Christian princes and people, now that Constantinople is lost, how vain was that fear, for if God had allowed it, and the Turks had dared more, they could have succeeded in all that they attempted, seeing that Christendom has made no effort to avenge the wrong. It is plain, indeed, that cities are better defended by the miraculous power of God than by the industry and strength of men.

I desired greatly to remain in that country, but the people were bestial, and the food did not agree with me. The country is almost as inaccessible as Greater India, where it is impossible to go, and there is little to see in other parts of the country, except those Christians I spoke of as miserable and ruined by the ill neighbourhood of the Tartars, and their want of a ruler to govern them; and so they will continue to suffer until God takes pity on them. The city of Kaffa is so cold in winter that the ships freeze in the harbour. Such is the bestiality and deformity of the people that I was glad to give up the desire I had to see more, and to return to Greece. I therefore collected my goods and departed from Kaffa.

CHAPTER XVII

Return to Constantinople.—St. Sophia.—The Relics.—Statue of Constantine (Justinian).—A Holy Picture.—The Hippodrome.—The Serpent Column.—A Statue called The Just.—The Palace.—The Library.—The miserable condition of the city.—Summary Justice.—A feint by the Turks.—They are bought off.

We sailed in the same ship, and continuing our course we returned to Trebizond, where, as I have said, the Emperor did his best to detain me, but he could not succeed, and we departed and came to Constantinople. But orders having been issued that no ships coming from the Black Sea were to enter the harbour, either at Constantinople or Pera, because it was feared that they would bring the plague with them, they built a shelter two leagues from Constantinople where the ships could discharge their cargo, and where they had to remain for sixty days unless they were prepared to put to sea again. Certainly the foreign nations bring much sickness with them, and I myself saw in that lodging men dead of plague. I sent one of my men to ask permission of the Despot Dragas to enter the city, notifying him that I and my people had left the ship, and that I had not lodged with the others, but had remained two days in the fields. He ordered a boat, which was very well fitted out, to be sent for me, and certain of my friends came out to receive me. I sent my people to the place where they were to lodge, and went to make my reverence to the Despot, who received me very graciously, as did also the Empress and her ladies. The Empress enquired of me how I had fared in the Black Sea, especially if I had seen her brother, the Emperor of Trebizond, and her other brother was there at that time. I told them what had

happened when I saw the Emperor, and they thanked me much, and the Empress said: "You could not have done more if you had been of our nation," and I replied: "Lady, I did that which was due from a good Christian." I then took my leave and returned to my lodging, very well attended by the nobles of the city.

On the day following I went to the Despot, and asked him if he would be pleased to direct that I should be shown the church of St. Sophia and its relics, and he replied that he would do it with pleasure, and that he himself desired to go there to hear Mass, as did also the Empress and her brother, the real Emperor of Trebizond. We then went to the church to Mass, and afterwards they caused the church to be shown to me. It is very large and they say that in the days of the prosperity of Constantinople there were in it six thousand clergy. Inside, the circuit is for the most part badly kept, but the church itself is in such fine state that it seems to-day to have only just been finished. It is made in the Greek manner with many lofty chapels, roofed with lead, and inside there is a profusion of mosaic work to a spear's length from the ground. This mosaic work is so fine that not even a brush could attempt to better it. Below are very delicate stones, intermixed with marble, porphyry, and jasper, very richly worked The floor is made of great stones, most delicately cut, which are very magnificent. In the centre of these chapels is the principal one which is very large; the height is such that it is difficult to believe that cement can hold it together. In this chapel there is similar mosaic work, with a figure of God the Father in the centre. From below it looks the size of an ordinary man, but they say that the foot is as long as a spear, and from eye to eye the distance is many spans in length. Here is the great altar, and here one can see all the grace and richness appertaining to geometry. Beneath this chapel there is a great

cistern[1] which, they say, could contain a ship of 3000 *botas* in full sail, the breadth, height and depth of water being all sufficient. I know not if such a statement can be supported, but I never saw a larger in my life and do not believe that one exists.

The Despot and the others directed the clergy to bring out the holy relics. The Despot keeps one key, and the Patriarch of Constantinople, who was there, the other. The third is kept by the Prior of the church. The clergy, in their vestments, brought out the relics in procession, which were: Firstly the lance which pierced Our Lord's side, a marvellous relic; the coat without a seam, which must at one time have been violet, but which had now grown grey with age; one of the nails; and some thorns from Our Lord's crown, with many others, such as the wood of the Cross, and the pillar at which Our Lord was scourged. There were also several things of Our Blessed Lady the Virgin, and the gridiron on which St. Lawrence was roasted, and many other relics which St. Helena took when she was at Jerusalem and carried here, which are much reverenced and closely guarded. God grant that in the overthrow of the Greeks they have not fallen into the hands of the enemies of the Faith, for they will have been ill-treated and handled with little reverence. As we came out we saw at the door of the church a great column of stone, higher than the great chapel itself, and on the top is a great horse of gilded brass, upon which is a knight with one arm raised, pointing with the finger towards Turkey, and in the other he holds an orb, as a sign that all the world is in his hand[2]. One day it was blown down in a great storm, and the orb fell from the hand, and they say that it is as large as a 15 gallon jar, but from below it looks like an orange, so that one can judge how high the statue is. They say that to secure that orb, and to fasten the horse with chains, to prevent its being blown down in the high

winds, cost 8000 ducats. This knight, they say, is Constantine, and that he prognosticated that from that quarter which he indicated with his finger would come the destruction of Greece, and so it was. That day we were occupied until midday admiring the church and its circuit. Outside this church are great squares with houses where they are accustomed to sell wine and bread and fish, and more shell-fish than anything else, since the Greeks are in the habit of eating them. In certain times of fasting during the year they do not only confine themselves to fish, but to fish without blood, that is, shell-fish. Here they have great tables of stone where they eat, both rulers and common people, together.

The Despot and the Empress and her brother then returned to the Palace, and I went to my lodging. The next day I went to the church of St. Mary,[3] where the body of Constantine is buried. In this church is a picture of Our Lady the Virgin, made by St. Luke, and on the other side is Our Lord crucified. It is painted on stone, and with the frame and stand it weighs, they say, several hundredweight. So heavy is it as a whole that six men cannot lift it. Every Tuesday some twenty men come there, clad in long red linen draperies which cover the head like a stalking-dress. These men come of a special lineage, and by them alone can that office be filled. There is a great procession, and the men who are so clad go one by one to the picture, and he whom it is pleased with takes it up as easily as if it weighed only an ounce. The bearer then places it on his shoulder, and they go singing out of the church to a great square, where he who carries the picture walks with it from one end to the other, and fifty times round the square. By fixing one's eyes upon the picture, it appears to be raised high above the ground and completely transfigured. When it is set down again, another comes and takes it up and puts it

likewise on his shoulder, and then another, and in that manner some four or five of them pass the day. There is a market in the square on that day, and a great crowd assembles, and the clergy take cotton-wool and touch the picture and distribute it among the people who are there, and then, still in procession, they take it back to its place. While I was at Constantinople I did not miss a single day when this picture was exhibited, since it is certainly a great marvel.

There was a church[4] at Constantinople, not so large as St. Sophia, but, as they say, much richer, which St. Helena built, desiring greatly to show her power. At the entrance were certain arches which were very dark, and they say that people were found there frequently committing the offence of sodomy, and one day a thunder-bolt fell from Heaven and set fire to the church, and not one of those who was surprised in that sin was spared. The church they called Valayerna, and it is to-day so burnt that it cannot be repaired. There is also a monastery, called Pentecatro,[5] which belongs to the monks of the Order of St. Basil (there is no other Order in those parts), and this also is very richly adorned with gold mosaics. In it are the vessels which were filled with wine at the marriage of Architeclinos, and many other relics, and it is the burial place of the Emperors. On one side of the city, towards the sea and over against Turkey, is a monastery for women, on a wall, called St. Demetrius, and one can see Turkey across the narrowest part of the Straits. Opposite to it on the Turkish side there is a tower where a chain was stretched from one side to the other, and when it was made fast the ships could not pass. This was done partly for display, and partly in order not to lose the tolls which were collected there, and this they call the Arm of St. George. At one part the Straits are so narrow that one can see a man passing on the opposite shore. Moreover, the sea is very shallow

on the Turkish side, and so deep on the Greek side that a ship of any size, and however large, can lie against the walls of Constantinople, so that it looks as if one could jump from the walls on to the ship.

There is in Constantinople a great place made by hand, with porticoes and gateways, and arches below, where the people used in ancient times to watch the games when they celebrated their holidays,[6] and in the centre are two snakes entwined, made of gilded brass, and they say that wine poured from the mouth of one and milk from the other. But no one can remember this, and it seems to me that too much credit must not be attached to the story. There is a statue of a man in the centre of this square, also of gilded brass, and they say that when merchants could not agree as to price they consented to go to this statue, which they called the Just,[7] and what it signified as correct by shutting the hand, that was the true price of the goods, and both parties accepted it. There was once a nobleman who had a horse which was valued at 300 ducats, and a gentleman of those parts desired to buy it, and they could not agree on the price. They arranged, therefore, to go to the statue to determine the question, and they went there, and the purchaser took out some ducats and laid one in the hand of the statue, which thereupon shut its hand, giving to understand that the horse was not worth more, and the purchaser had the horse and the seller the ducat, but the seller was so incensed that he took out his scimitar and cut off the statue's hand, and after that it never judged again. When the buyer reached home the horse fell dead, and the hide and shoes fetched just a ducat. But I would place more faith in anything found in the Evangelists.

On the other side of this square is a bath[8] with doors on either side opposite each other, and any woman accused of adultery was ordered by the judges to be

brought there, and they made her go in by one door and come out at the other, and if she was innocent she passed through without shame, but if otherwise her skirts and chemise raised themselves on high without her perceiving it, so that from the middle downwards everything could be seen. This also it may be no sin to doubt. In the centre of this square there is an obelisk[9] made of a single stone, in the same manner as that at Rome, where are the ashes of Julius Caesar, but in fact it is not like that one, nor is it fine nor ancient. They say that it was made for the body of Constantine. There are also many buildings about this square, and inside it, and they call it the Hippodrome.

The city of Constantinople is made like a triangle, two parts in the sea and one on land. It is very strongly walled in a way that is a marvel to see. They say that the Turks came there and put the city in great straits, and he that had charge of the mines was amazed, and said to the Grand Turk: "Lord, this city is not to be taken by mining, for the walls are of steel and will never fall." (This was said because the walls are very high and are made of great marble blocks bound together.) But as the Grand Turk was continuing his attempt, they told him that they had seen a man on horseback riding on the wall. He then asked a Greek who had been captured what this marvel was which they saw each night, namely, a knight riding round the ramparts on a horse, fully armed. He replied: "Lord, the Greeks say as follows: when "Constantine built his church, many men were em-"ployed on the work, and one day, as all were going "to dinner, the chief master-builder ordered a child "to stay and guard the tools. The child did so, and "a very beautiful man on horseback appeared and said "to him: 'Why do you not go to eat with the others?' "and the child replied: 'Lord, they ordered me to

" ' remain here to guard the tools.' But the horseman " replied: ' Go and eat,' and the child replied that he " dare not. Whereupon the horseman said: ' Go " ' without fear. I promise you that I will guard the " ' church and the city until you return.' And the " child went, but afterwards, being afraid of punish- " ment, he did not return, so that the horseman remained " in fulfilment of his promise, and they say that it was " an angel." But it might be said now that the child had returned, and the angel had ceased his guard, for the city is now captured and occupied. But for that time the Turk departed.

The Emperor's Palace must have been very magnificent,[10] but now it is in such state that both it and the city show well the evils which the people have suffered and still endure. At the entrance to the Palace, beneath certain chambers, is an open loggia of marble with stone benches round it, and stones, like tables, raised on pillars in front of them, placed end to end. Here are many books and ancient writings and histories, and on one side are gaming boards so that the Emperor's house may always be well supplied. Inside, the house is badly kept, except certain parts where the Emperor, the Empress, and attendants can live, although cramped for space. The Emperor's state is as splendid as ever, for nothing is omitted from the ancient ceremonies, but, properly regarded, he is like a Bishop without a See. When he rides abroad all the Imperial rites are strictly observed. The Empress rides astride, with two stirrups, and when she desires to mount, two lords hold up a rich cloth, raising their hands aloft and turning their backs upon her, so that when she throws her leg across the saddle no part of her person can be seen. The Greeks are great hunters with falcons, goshawks, and dogs. The country is well stocked with game both for hawking and hunting, and there are quantities of pheasants, francolins,

partridges, and hares. The land is flat and good for riding.

The city is sparsely populated. It is divided into districts, that by the sea-shore having the largest population. The inhabitants are not well clad, but sad and poor, showing the hardship of their lot which is, however, not so bad as they deserve, for they are a vicious people, steeped in sin. It is their custom when anyone dies not to open the door of the house for the whole of that year except in case of necessity. They go continually about the city howling as if in lamentation, and thus they long ago foreshadowed the evil which has befallen them. On one side of the city is the dockyard. It is close to the sea, and must have been very magnificent; even now it is sufficient to house the ships. In the quarter over against Pera is a mole made by hand, where the ships are fastened. Here the salt water comes in and meets a river which enters the sea at that place. The distance from there to Pera is twice as far as a man could cast a stone. When the ships come to Pera to traffic with the Genoese, they first salute Constantinople and pay tribute, and criminal justice is administered from Constantinople for Pera and the whole country. These harbours of entry, the one and the other, are always full of ships, on account of the great cargoes which they discharge and load.

One day the Castilian captain who was there sent for me, because one of his men had been killed at sea by a Greek, with intent to steal his ship, and I went to him, and we took the criminal and the corpse to the Emperor that justice might be done. Although the Greeks did not wish it, yet out of his great regard for me, and because I said that our people might otherwise take vengeance upon those who were innocent, the Emperor sent at once for the executioner, and in front of the Palace he ordered the criminal's hands to be cut

off, and his eyes to be put out. I enquired why they did not put him to death, and they replied that the Emperor could not order his soul to be destroyed. They told me also that when Charlemagne took Jerusalem, on the way by which his people had to return, many of them travelled through Greece and were killed by the Greeks, and that the others, when they heard of this, took the road through Tartary and Russia, where the inhabitants were Christians, and from there they passed into Hungary and Germany. It is said that the reason why the Russians of those parts are so beautiful, is that many Frenchmen settled there and married. The Emperor Charlemagne then came up against Constantinople, and made great war on the Emperor of Greece, but in the end they had to make peace, and the Emperor, as penance for the killing of those men, promised to fast during the whole of Lent, which they say is observed differently than with us (since the Greeks cannot reconcile it with their consciences to eat fish with blood, but only shell-fish), and, further, that no one, however great his crime, should be put to death, but that the punishment was to be loss of hands and eyes. In Greece, therefore, there are many maimed and blinded men. This is the manner in which the Despot gave us justice, and we were content with what he did.

During my stay in the city the Grand Turk marched forth to a place on the Black Sea, and his road took him close to Constantinople. The Despot and those of Pera, thinking that the Turks were going to occupy the country, prepared and armed themselves.[11] The Grand Turk passed close by the wall, and there was some skirmishing that day, and he passed with a great company of people. I had the good fortune to see him in the field, and I observed the manner in which he went to war, and his arms, horses and accoutrements. I am of opinion that if the Turks were to meet the

armies of the West they could not overcome them, not because they are lacking in strength, but because they want many of the essentials of war. On this day a great present was carried from Constantinople and taken to the place where the Turks were stationed. I thought that they would sit down and besiege the city, but they continued their march to the Black Sea against a people which had rebelled. It was, indeed, what I desired, for we had but few men, and it would have been difficult to make much resistance. It was, therefore, a gratifying thing to see so great a host depart without peril or labour. Would to God that the people of our country were closer at hand, for there are here neither ships nor fortresses, nor is there any protection except by fighting.

CHAPTER XVIII

Brusa.—Pera.—Departure from Constantinople.—Tafur rescues some Christian slaves and is wounded.—Mytilene.—Salonica.—A great storm.—Ragusa.—Ancona.—Spalato.—A sea monster.

The next day I asked a friend of mine, a Genoese, who had a house in a city of Turkey which they call Brusa,[1] at the extremity of the Gulf of Nicomedia, to take me with him, and he did so. We went by sea, and I saw the city, which is unwalled, but greater and better than any in Turkey. There are some 4000 inhabitants, and but for the gulf it would be of little value, for by it the merchants have communication with the city. They bring there many things by land from Persia. It is situated very close to Greece, and since the Turks have owned it they have much improved the place, for it is a stepping-stone for the Turks from Greece to their own country. They have placed great stores there, for they use the city as a half-way port. I believe that in the whole of Turkey to-day there is no other place so large, nor so well peopled, nor so rich. From there I returned to Constantinople and Pera, whence I had set out.

The city of Pera[2] has about 2000 inhabitants. It is very well walled and has a good ditch and rampart. The churches and monasteries are excellent, and there is a fine exchange, well built and enclosed. The buildings are notable and lofty, as in Genoa. The common people are Greeks, but they are governed by the Genoese who hold all the offices. It is a place of much traffic in goods brought from the Black Sea, as well as from the West, and from Syria and Egypt, and the merchants are all wealthy. Pera was formerly called Galata.

After my return from the Black Sea I remained two months in Constantinople and Pera, and I then departed in a ship of Ancona, carrying with me my slaves and the other things I had purchased in Kaffa. We set sail, taking the route by which we had come, leaving Constantinople behind us, and passing Eregli, Silumbria, Marmora, and Gallipoli. As we sailed through the Straits, close by the Dardanelles, which was the port of Troy, we saw certain men making signs to us to come to shore. The captain said that he knew them to be Christian captives who wanted to escape in our ship, and that we should take no notice of them. But I begged him to launch a boat and go to their assistance, urging that if we left them to their fate it would be no wonder if God sent us bad luck, and in due course he put off a skiff, and I and four others rowed ashore. As we drew near some Turks came up, and seeing that we had come to take the prisoners, they commenced to fight with us. The captain of the ship, being a ready fellow, sent off a boat with twenty men with cross-bows and fire-arms, and it came to shore, and we beat off the Turks and sailed away safely with our Christians. I was wounded in the foot by an arrow, but it was well done, for we lost nothing and served God.

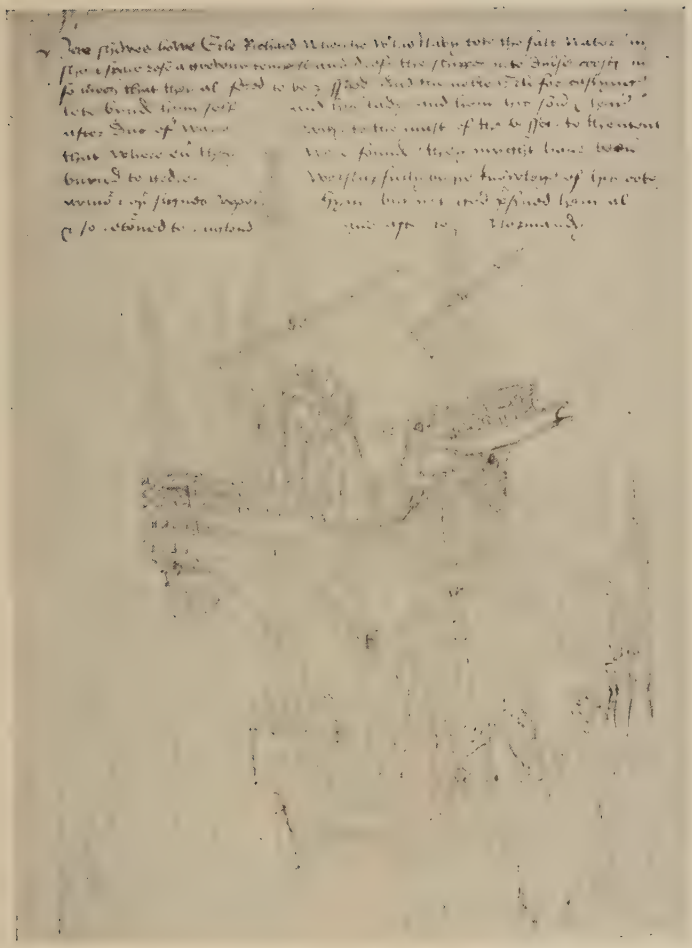
This day we sailed out of the Straits of Romania and anchored in the harbour of Tenedos, opposite Troy. The next day we sailed from there and, doubling the Cape of S. Maria, we came to the island of Mytilene which belongs to the Genoese, where I found the Emperor of Trebizond, who had fled from his brother, having, as I have said, married a daughter of the ruler in order to obtain his help, and he was collecting ships to set out for Trebizond against his brother. They enquired of me concerning the state of things at Trebizond, as it had appeared to me, and I told them the truth, namely, that having the Grand

Turk againſt them they could do nothing which would advantage themselves or injure their enemies. In this island there is much alum, and we loaded our ship with it. We then sailed away and turned towards Greece, taking the route for Salonica. In the sea is a very lofty island, which they call Monte Santo, which the Grand Turk, father of the present one, essayed to capture, but the plague fell on his hoſt, and he was conſtrained to order all the damage he had done to be repaired, and to make provision for those that live there. The place is ordered on this wise. There is a monastery at the foot of the mountain, another half way up, and a third at the top, and they receive there no one unless he is a noble by birth or has borne arms, or is old and infirm, or maimed. These come to this place and are received and entertained in the firſt monaſtery. The monks observe closely how they live, and if they live well, they send them up by election to the monaſtery in the centre. Here the same rule applies, and when it appears that they are worthy, the monks send them up again to the third and laſt monaſtery. They say that those who inhabit there have a great reputation for holiness, and the place is a great resort for pilgrims, and receives much in alms. But those who visit the place are only shown the firſt monaſtery. The monks are all Greeks, of the habit and Order of St. Basil. They not only eschew meat, but all fish having blood.

We departed thence, leaving the Gulf of Salonica on the right hand. At the end of the gulf is the city, which not long since was loſt by the Venetians, and it happened in this manner.[3] The Turk came to attack it with men by land, and also with his ships from the sea, and the Venetians made ready a great fleet, but it is said that they took counsel and were advised to give up Salonica, for two reasons, the one, because they could not reſiſt the might of the Turks by land, and the other because of the coſt of defending the place.

Further, that they had little profit from it, since the port was not well suited for trading, so that the Venetians and the other Italians set greater ſtore on profit than on honour. They set out with their fleet to engage the Turks, but the Turks deſtroyed it, and not a man escaped. Thus was the city of Salonica loſt. We came next to the island of Negroponto, which is in the Archipelago, and is governed by the Venetians. They say that in ancient times there was a bridge from there to the main land. The island is inhabited by Greeks, and it contains many orchards and much fruit. From there we sailed through the Archipelago, passing many islands, inhabited and uninhabited, on the one hand and on the other, and on the day of the Feaſt of Pentecoſt we reſted in an island called Andros.

On the second day of the feſtival we set sail, and ran with a very fresh wind through the Archipelago, but at midnight a great ſtorm arose in the sea so that we all but despaired of our lives, and there was much vowing of pilgrimages East and Weſt. At one time our ship was full of birds which perched upon our shoulders. These were flying from the ſtorm, and sought the ship to escape drowning. They were moſtly hoopoes. This, they say, happens seldom, and only during great ſtorms. We arrived at Vespers, with sails torn to shreds, at the island of Crete, and the wind carried us in shore to that part of the island called Canea, and we drove thus before the wind until we came close to the land where we anchored. Here we remained a day and night and the following day until afternoon. A hermit, who had seen us the day before, driving with bare poles, watched the ship put in, and observing that no one came ashore, and that no movement was to be seen in the ship, entered his boat and came out to us, and found us sleeping. He had been amazed at the fierceness of the ſtorm during the night, and feared that his hermitage would be carried



A STORM AT SEA.

From the Warwick Pageant, 1383-1439. (The Earl of Warwick binds himself, his lady and son to the mast)

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away by the wind, and seeing us come in at dawn he prayed to God for us. The captain remained in the ship repairing the sails, and I and my people went ashore with the hermit to see his house, and we carried victuals which I had in the ship, in particular that kind of fish which the Greek monks eat, and we remained there three days with him, spending the time very pleasantly, and he sent refreshment to the captain from what he had there. As for me, I had experienced such terrors that had I been on the mainland I would never have put to sea again.

But on the fourth day we sailed away once more, and came to Modone, and remained two days outside, since the place is very unhealthy. We then departed, sailing along the coast of Morea to the Gulf of Patras, past the island of Corfu, which I have already described.[4] We now entered the Gulf of Venice, leaving Italy on the left hand, and on the right the coast of Albania. We saw many towns on the sea-coast and strong castles, and there is a city called Valona, which the Turks had taken and then ruled. All the sea here is dotted with islands, some inhabited and some uninhabited. We came to the coast of Esclavonia, to a city called Ragusa which is a province of the Emperor of Germany, and this country of Esclavonia they call Dalmatia. There are very fine hawks in these parts, for the country is high and mountainous, and taller people I have never seen anywhere. In Dalmatia and Albania they say that there are many mines where silver is found. The city of Ragusa is very strong. It is situated above the sea and is very rich in merchandise. It looks towards Italy, and on the other side one can see Ancona and its territories. We remained there one day and departed for Ancona, as our ship belonged there and had to discharge certain cargo and go on to Venice. That night we encountered a great storm, and the next day at Vespers we reached Ancona and anchored and went on shore.

We remained at Ancona four days. The city, with all the March of Ancona, as they call it, is of the patrimony of the Church. It is well walled and strong, and the houses are all turreted and lofty, in the manner of Genoa. They say that he who built Genoa also built Ancona, and it well appears from its buildings that it is a very ancient place. They drive a great trade there and fit out many ships, which go about the seas carrying merchandise, and the people on land live more upon trade than on anything else. The country is fruitful in corn and wine and fruit, and in everything needful for life. At that time it was rumoured that Count Francesco, who then had conquered a great part of the March, desired also to take Ancona, and the people were preparing for the defence. Afterwards I learnt that he had made the attempt, but could not enter the city.

We set sail after four days and drew near to Dalmatia. The coast is much affected by sailors on account of the excellent shelter and anchorage, the like of which is not to be found on the Italian side. So, coasting along Dalmatia, and passing many islands, some inhabited and some uninhabited, like the Archipelago, although in size and population they are not so notable, we came to a town called Spalato, which is also in Dalmatia. St. Jerome and St. Christopher were born in this town, and there is an arm of the sea which passes by a hamlet, where they say St. Christopher carried the poor people across who could not pay for a boat, and even to-day there is some remembrance of the houses of both those saints. In the gulf, which strikes inland here, it happened on several occasions that women who were washing their linen disappeared without anyone knowing the reason. One day, when the women were in the water as usual, a monster, half fish from the middle downwards, and having human shape above, with wings like a bat, attacked one of the women and seized her

and carried her down under the water. The other women, and also some men who were there, hearing her cries, ran to the place where the monster was struggling with her, but not even when they attacked it would it let her go. They wounded the beast and dragged it ashore alive, and it was three hours or more before it died. There was then little doubt that the women who had disappeared before had been seized by this monster. They cut it open and salted it, and sent it to the Seigniory of Venice so that it might be dispatched to Pope Eugenius, and a picture was made and carried all over Castile and throughout the world. I did not see the beast, but they told me of it, and it was only a short time since it happened. This place is a Bishopric, and at the court of the Pope I saw the Bishop, who was a native of France.

CHAPTER XIX

Parenzo.—Return to Venice.—The fresh pilgrims.—Tafur's goods are seized and released by order of the Doge.—The ceremony of the Marriage of the Sea.—St. Mark's treasure.—The Emperor Barbarossa and the Pope.

We departed from Spalato and came to a town called Parenzo, which is at the point of Dalmatia opposite Venice, and it is ruled by the Seigniory. The ships desiring to reach Venice anchor there first, to await the opportunity to enter by the narrows between the two castles, and in all that coast there is good shelter, and excellent anchorage. The next day we sailed into the harbour of Venice, and found many ships outside waiting to sail, and among them the galley for the Holy Sepulchre which we recognized by its banners. We asked why everything was in such readiness, and they told us that it was Ascension Day, and that after Mass and the Blessing each one was to go to his ship to prepare for the voyage. It was on that day, at that hour, two years previously that I had set out for Jerusalem.[1] I enquired if there were any Castilians among the pilgrims, and they told me that Gutierre Quixada and Pero Barva de Campos were going to Jerusalem, and that they were in the city watching the celebrations which were going forward. We entered and disembarked before St. Mark's and went at once to the church to hear Mass, where we found a great concourse of people, since it was on Ascension Day that the Venetians gained a great victory over the Emperor Barbarossa, as I shall hereafter relate. There I found Gutierre Quixada and Pero Barva and Luys Vanegas and Juan de Angulo, brother to Fernando de Angulo, and many other Castilians with whom I had much pleasure, and they no less with me, and

since they were going to Jerusalem, they were able to inform themselves as to how best to undertake the journey, and I told them what they had to do and how much the journey would cost. But it seemed to me that they had fallen out amongst themselves and were going in separate ships. I laboured to reconcile them, but could not do it, and so they departed, some to the oared galley, and others to the galley set aside for poor people. We dined together that day, and after the festival, and having obtained plenary indulgence against sin and punishment, and after the Blessing, I went with them to the sea and saw them embark betimes.

I then returned with the other Castilians to the city, and found that the goods I had brought in the ship, including the slaves and the other things, had been taken from me under the pretext that no one could bring goods from the Black Sea unless he was a native of Venice, and that I had not notified them to the customs' authorities. That day, being a great festival, the people assembled in the Piazza of St. Mark, all arrayed in their best, and some seven or eight knights entered, wearing the device of the Emperor Sigismund, which I also wear, and I went at once to them and complained of what had been done. Thereupon they accompanied me to the Doge, who represents the ruler of the country, and the Castilians who were there went also, and I spoke to the Doge, who was in council, and made my complaint. The members of the council asked me to retire for a space while they deliberated, and soon they called me and said: "Sir knight; it is true that we "have a law that none can bring with him anything "to this city from the Black Sea or the Levant, unless "he is a native of Venice, and if he does so his goods "are forfeit, and therefore your goods are forfeit by "this law, but, as you say, this law is intended to apply, "and should apply, to merchants, and your habit "debars you from trading; further that what you

" carry is for your own service, so that the law does not " touch you. Your goods are therefore quit, and if " the law says otherwise the Seigniory will graciously " abrogate it. Also, because of the noble nation to " which you belong, we will do you a greater favour. " We will not only restore what is yours, but will give " you licence to transport your goods whither you " desire, a privilege which is not commonly given to " any, since nothing which enters Venice can be taken " out."

I then took my leave of the Doge, who made me many kind offers, and those gentlemen who had accompanied me went with me and procured the deliverance of all my goods, and did not leave me until I reached my lodging. Also that day they sent me wine and comfits and game, and every day when they met me they gave me a hearty welcome, as if they had been my close kinsmen.

On Ascension Day they have great celebrations and exhibit all their treasures, including the treasure of St. Mark, and jewels in the streets at the doors of the houses. The money-changers display their gold and silver, and all the men and women are arrayed very richly, with jewels of great worth. On this day the Doge goes forth in great magnificence, with Papal and Imperial ceremonial, the right to which he obtained, they say, on this day, and there are grand processions, and having heard Mass, he goes with all the clergy to the sea, and they all embark, the Doge and the lords in a ship called Bucentoro, which is a third larger than a galley and twice as broad, and the rowers are below out of sight. It is all hung with rich cloth of gold, and the deck is carpeted with fine tapestry. If strangers or honourable men are present they take them also, carrying crosses and pennons, very richly worked in drawn gold. So full is the sea with ships that the water can hardly be seen. They sail out to sea and

betake themselves to the entrance to the harbour, where are the two castles, and there, making certain orations, the priest pronounces a blessing and throws in Holy Water, and the Doge draws a ring from his finger and casts it into the sea. This, they say, is an ancient ceremony for wedding the sea to the land to placate its fury, since their city is founded in the sea, and from the sea they draw all that they have.

When this was finished it was an hour before all the ships could separate, and after the Blessing they spread their sails and took their courses, which is a wonderful thing to see. The Doge then returned, with all his gentlemen, to a sandy beach between the castles, where is a notable monastery of friars, and there disembarking, they all feasted with the Doge at his expense and made merry, and in the evening they returned to the city. This day I went to see the treasure of St. Mark, and certain people of the city went with me so that all should be shown me, although everything was on view. There I beheld much riches, especially pearls, and precious stones, quantities of rubies, diamonds, and balas rubies, among them three stones in three candlesticks, but set loosely so that one can take them in the hand to look at them. There are bishops' mitres loaded with pearls and precious stones and silver, and palliums, also covered with jewels and pearls, and great quantities of gold and silver, and they say also that there is a rare piece of carbuncle. In truth, a greater display of riches I never saw. There is a retable, which they call La Pala, entirely covered with pearls and precious stones, but I cannot write at length of it as it would take up too much space.

The Venetians say that the Emperor Barbarossa waged such war on the Pope that he gained all the patrimony of the Church, and caused the Pope to flee and take shelter in Venice, where he remained a long time in a monastery without being discovered.[2] Then

one came to know of it who saw him, and he told the Doge, and he with the council went to seek the Pope in that monastery, but could not find him, and they made all the friars come out, down to the cook, and then they found him, for he was the cook. They took him and carried him away with them, and dressed him with the ceremony which belonged to him, and lodged him in the palace of the Seigniory, and there he was treated and reverenced as the Pope. They wrote also to Rome, and to all Italy, saying that the Pope was there, and they notified the Emperor and begged him to restore the patrimony of the Church so that the Pope might return worthily to Rome. The Emperor, incensed against the Pope and against the Venetians, armed a great fleet and came to Venice, as far as the two castles, and the Venetians had a great fleet there, and they went out against him, and fought with him, and overcame him, so that he had to flee, and they took his son prisoner. The son, being there in prison, asked the Pope to let him go on his word, and that he would endeavour to bring the Emperor, his father, to obedience, and that if he did not succeed he would return to prison. The Pope, with the consent of the Seigniory, gave him licence, and dispatched him in a galley to the city of Ancona where his father was, and there he spoke with him, and begged him to return to his obedience to the Pope and submit to him, and restore what was his, but he could not persuade him, and he returned to prison. But within a few days the Emperor sent to desire that his son might have licence to come again and have speech with him, as he desired to respond to the proposals which he had made concerning the Pope. The son craved licence from the Pope and the Seigniory, as before, and accepted the conditions, and set off once more, and came to his father. Then the Emperor consented with him of his own free will, and even acknowledged to have done evil in the past, and

desired to submit to the Pope, and to restore what was his and beg for pardon, and to place himself in his hands. With this accord the son returned to Venice, and there was much pleasure over the Emperor's good reply, and they armed a great fleet, and the greatest in the city went in it. They filled it with gear and all things necessary to carry so great a lord, and came to the city of Ancona where the Emperor received them very honourably. He entered the ship and came to Venice, where he was treated very magnificently, and they took him to the church of St. Mark. They say, further, that they placed him at the door lying on the ground so that the Pope should pass over him, and so it was, for the Pope, coming out of his palace and entering the church, stepped over him saying the verse: *Super aspidem et basiliscum ambulabis* etc. The Emperor replied: "That was not said to you but to St. Peter," and the Pope made answer: "To St. Peter and to me, and to me and to St. Peter." Then he raised him up and gave him his peace, and the Emperor asked pardon and confessed that he had sinned, whereupon the Pope pardoned him, and presently the Emperor restored all the patrimony of the Church which he had taken.

The Emperor remained in Venice ten days amidst great rejoicings, and the Doge accompanied the Pope and the Emperor to Ancona in his fleet, with the greatest lords of the country, at his charges. At Ancona the Emperor had made great preparations to receive them, that city with its Marches being one of the richest of the Church's patrimonies. They remained there a further ten days feasting, after which the Pope and the Emperor went to Rome, and the Doge returned with his people to Venice. It is related that the Pope and the Emperor told the Doge that he might ask what favour he would of them, since he had performed so excellent a work, and they would grant it,

and he requested of both of them the right to use their ceremonials. They granted the request, and the Doge to this day uses the Papal and Imperial ceremonials. He then took leave of the Pope and the Emperor and came to Venice, and in a great hall, the greatest and richest which they have in their palace on the sea, they have set up the history of this affair, which is painted very richly. This is the reason why the Venetians have these celebrations on Ascension Day, for on that day they won their victory, and the Pope then granted them plenary indulgence for sin and punishment, and the ships do not depart until they have gained it.

CHAPTER XX

Description of Venice.—The Gondolas.—St. Mark's.—The Campanile.—The government.—Provisions and trade.—Wealth of the common people.—Sanitary arrangements.—Rigorous administration of justice.—The Arsenal.—A hospital for foundlings.—Scrupulous regard for money matters.—The possessions abroad.

The city of Venice is very populous, and there is much country round about it. The houses are built very close together. They say that there are 70,000 inhabitants, but the strangers and serving people, mostly slaves, are very numerous. The city has no walls, nor any fortress, except those two castles which enclose the harbour, since its defence lies in the sea. They draw a chain across from one side to the other so that they may be secure, and if the whole world came up against the city, the Venetians could sink a ship between the two castles in the canal and be safe. The city is built on the sea, and there are artificial canals along which the boats can pass, and in some parts there are streets where the people can go on foot. Elsewhere, in places where the canals are too narrow for ships, there are bridges, and as in Castile everyone has a beast to ride, so here they all have boats and pages to row and attend to them. And as we pride ourselves on a fine horse and a pretty well-dressed page, so they set great store by their boats, which are kept very properly. They are well hung and fitted with cabins and seats, so that one or two or more may travel in them. The exits from the city to the main-land are made artificially, and only small boats can go there, since the water is not sufficient for large craft, and the canals are shallow and sandy. Thus neither great ships nor beasts can enter or leave the city, which is sea-bound, and for this reason they say that Venice is the finest

fortress in the world. The boats go to the main-land for all necessaries, and also for drinking water. They take certain large boats and fill them with sand, and in the bottom is a hole with a plug. When the boat enters a river of fresh water, they open the plug and fill the boats to their full capacity and replace the plug, and so they carry the water for their needs. There are cisterns in all the houses in the city, and many common cisterns, built of brick above the sea, made in such a manner that the water in them, as I found with similar cisterns at Jerusalem, neither grows stale nor stinks, as in other places. But it would take long to describe all their methods.

There are many churches and monasteries in the city which are very rich and sumptuously built, among them the principal and greatest is the church of St. Mark, which is the chief and head of all. It is built with domes in the Greek manner, covered with lead on the outside, with gilded cupolas. Inside, it is very finely decorated with rich golden mosaics. The floor also is decorated with similar mosaics, except that they are large and coloured. At the great door, high up over one of the arches, are four great horses of brass, thickly gilt. These the Venetians carried away and placed here in triumph when they took Constantinople.[1] In front of this door is a great square, greater than the Medina del Campo, paved with bricks, and surrounded by many-storied houses with porticoes. They hold a market here every Thursday, which is greater than that of the Torre del Campo, a hamlet of Jaen. On one side of this square is a very high tower,[2] as high as that in Seville, with a cross of fine gold on the top, a very beautiful thing to see. It can be seen in the sun at a distance of 80 miles away. In it are the bells which they ring, one for Mass, one for Vespers, one to summon the Council, which they call the Council Bell, and one when they arm the fleet, and each one is

recognized by all. On another side of this square, facing the sea, are two very large and lofty columns.[3] On the one is St. George with the Dragon and on the other St. Mark, the patron Saint and the device of the city. These also were carried away from Constantinople. They say that no one could set them up, but a Castilian climbed up and raised and secured them, whereupon the Venetians ordered that he should have whatever he desired. He did not ask anything for himself, but round about the columns are certain steps, and he requested that if any criminal, whatever his offence, took refuge there, justice should not be executed upon him. And now rogues play there at dice and commit other knaveries, praising the man who secured them such immunity.

Between these columns and the church of St. Mark is the Palace of the Seigniory, and in one part of it the Doge is lodged with his family, and the rest is open for anyone to see, as well as that great hall where, as I have related, the affair of the Pope and the Emperor is painted. Here they hold the Council. There are other halls, also very rich, where they administer justice and have their prison, and beneath the arches, over against the great square, are certain marble stones. Three are coloured, and there they hang the nobles, and the others are for hanging the common people. In these porticoes strangers leave their arms, and there are also some skins of the beasts called crocodiles[4] which the Sultan of Egypt sent as things most monstrous to the Seigniory. This palace is indeed very noble.

The Venetians have a law that none but a noble by birth can be Doge, or hold any office of government, and this they always observe, unless for some special reason they abrogate it. Every Sunday after dinner they ring the Council Bell in that tower I have spoken of, and all the nobles assemble and report what has

occurred during the week, both in matters of government and in the administration of civil and criminal justice, excepting only the matters deliberated upon by the Secret Council, chiefly matters of war, which Council is composed of the Doge and the deputies. The assembly looks like a royal court, and at the doors of the palace are as many boats and well-dressed pages as there are beasts with us. Thus the nobles come out of the palace and go to their houses. The government provides as follows. Wine and bread, corn and oil, and other things necessary for food cannot be bought by any citizen, only by strangers and poor people. These are sold to them at a price which would appear to leave no profit for those who bring them from the ends of the earth, but the Seigniory pays for them so that there may be plenty, and that strangers and poor people shall not want. Indeed, such is the government that I never saw a country so plentifully supplied, nor so cheaply, with the necessities of life. It appears that the fruit which comes from Spain is to be had at Venice as fresh and as cheap as in our country. Likewise is to be had whatever comes from Syria and, if one desires it, from India, since the Venetians navigate all over the world. With their merchandise they bring also other things for the sustenance of the people.

The citizens are very rich and deal in such vast quantities that even with small profits they gain much, and what they sell is to be had at a fair price. The houses are very notable, being exceedingly lofty, with many storeys and chimneys, and furnished with rich porticoes and windows towards the streets. They are richly adorned with gold and blue and marble. The great people close at hand, and even at a distance, pride themselves on becoming citizens of Venice in order to have her favour, such as the King of Cyprus, the Marquis of Ferrara, the Marquis of Mantua, the Marquis of Monferrat, who with other great lords and knights

have magnificent houses in the city. I saw there the Cardinal of Cyprus, brother of the King, who was living in the house of his brother. He was about to depart for Cyprus, the galley which was to take him being moored to the door of his house, and there I met him and went with him through the city. Many other ships, great and small, lay there also, fastened to the doors of their owners' houses.

There are many notable monasteries at Venice, which are very sumptuous and magnificent, there being more than eighty for men and women, and above fifty churches. There are likewise many relics and holy bodies: the body of St. Helena, that of St. Marina, and a leg of St. Christopher from the knee downwards, as well as many bones of the Innocents, with an infinite number more which the Venetians brought from Constantinople when they took it. The common people are unusually wealthy, as I saw during the Carnival, at a masquerade in the Doge's Palace. Two galleys came by sea, and they were supposed to bring, the one the Emperor, who came with thirty knights dressed in brocade, and the other the Grand Master of Rhodes who was clad in black velvet. The ladies who received them were attired in brocades, and wore rich jewels, and, of a truth, I saw some who wore three different dresses at that festivity, and even that was not accounted extraordinary. All these people were of the middle classes of the city, and not of the better classes nor the richest. Yet the festival could not have been better.

The city is as clean for walking in as a gracious chamber, so well paved and bricked is it. No beast on four legs can enter it, and in winter there is no water in the streets. There is, therefore, no mud, and in summer no dust. The sea rises and falls there, although not so much as in the West, and cleans out the filth from the secret places, otherwise it would not be

possible to live for the ſtench. They say that at times the air is infected, but they have fires both winter and summer, and burn many perfumes, and the people carry with them scents and spices, which are ground in the ſtreets and give forth a moſt pleasant smell.

Until recently the rulers had no licence to own possessions on the mainland, but some time since the Seigniory, having increased its power by land and sea, and having gained many provinces, gave leave to settle on the mainland so that if necessary the people could go there to refresh themselves, and also that when sickness broke out they could have some place to escape to. The Doge is never suffered to leave the city for any cause whatever, except to go to the monaſtery of St. George, which is a ſtone's throw by sea from his palace, and when the city is unhealthy he departs thither. It happened once that a Doge went there to escape a peſtilence in the city,[5] and everyone departed for the mainland, so that none remained except the poor people. A kinsman approached the Doge and said to him: "Lord, you have now such an opportunity "as never man had. You have in your possession the "treasure of Venice, the chief people have all departed, "and none remain except ſtrangers and the poor. Do "what you will, take the treasure, place the crown on "your head, and call yourself King of Venice, and you "will wear the crown for always." The Doge reproached him greatly for what he had said, and the matter remained secret. But some time later, when certain people spoke ill of the Doge, the kinsman repeated the counsel he had given and said: "It serves him right since he would not be King of Venice." Thereupon the kinsman was taken and brought before the Council that they might know the truth, and he was closely examined as to what he had said, and he confessed all. Then the lords of the Council went to the Doge and enquired if it were true, and he replied that it had

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By Gabriel Muffel of Nuremberg (1465)

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happened as his kinsman had related. The lords of the Council conferred together, and finally they called the Doge and thanked him much for his loyalty to his country, but in that he had kept silence in a matter which might have threatened great danger to the State, they requested him to await their pleasure. They then ordered that great benefits should be showered upon his wife and children, but directed that he should lose his head, since none might dare to keep silence in any matter affecting the public safety. They have in the great hall, which I have mentioned, all the arms of the Doges from the first down to the present, and also those of the Doge whom they killed among the others, these being draped in black velvet.

The Venetians pride themselves on inflicting punishments which remain for a perpetual memorial. There was a citizen in treaty against the city and they ordered him to be killed, and turned his house into a slaughter-house, and have a statue of him hanging in chains. Another also, for some crime, they killed and left his house without a door in it which could be shut, and those who lived there had to do so as best they could. While I was there they had for Captain the Count of Carmeñola,[6] and they said that he was engaged in some evil against the city. They made him come there under safe conduct, and he was taken, and they tore out his tongue by the roots, and tortured him in other ways until he died, and they buried him in a dung heap and placed over him a stone with these words cut upon it: "Here lies the traitor, the Count of Carmeñola." These and other similar things are done in this city.

There is an arsenal at Venice which is the finest in the world, as well for artillery as for things necessary for navigation. The sea flows into it, and the ships enter the water there after they pass the castles. They told me that, including the war galleys and merchant vessels, and others which were in the water and on the

ſtocks, there were altogether eighty galleys, besides other ships. One day, coming from hearing Mass in St. Mark's, I saw about twenty men enter the square, some carrying benches and others tables and others chairs, and others large bags of money; thereupon a trumpet was blown, and the great bell, which they call the Council Bell, was rung, and in an hour the square was full of men who received pay and went into the arsenal. And as one enters the gate there is a great ſtreet on either hand with the sea in the middle, and on one side are windows opening out of the houses of the arsenal, and the same on the other side, and out came a galley towed by a boat, and from the windows they handed out to them, from one the cordage, from another the bread, from another the arms, and from another the baliſtas and mortars, and so from all sides everything which was required, and when the galley had reached the end of the ſtreet all the men required were on board, together with the complement of oars, and she was equipped from end to end. In this manner there came out ten galleys, fully armed, between the hours of three and nine. I know not how to describe what I saw there, whether in the manner of its conſtruction or in the management of the workpeople, and I do not think there is anything finer in the world. If the Venetians desired to show their ſtrength, the enemies of the Faith in those parts would not, in my opinion, have a single ship at sea, ſtill less on the coaſt, nor would they dare to match themselves againſt such a powerful enemy.

In times paſt there were few weeks, or even days, when the fishermen did not take out dead babies from their nets, and this, they say, came from the faſt that the merchants were so long separated from their wives. These, urged by their fleshly luſts, gave way to them and became pregnant, and with intent to save their reputations threw the offspring out of window into

the sea as soon as they were delivered, the place being aptly disposed therefor. The rulers, in view of such enormous crimes, took counsel together and founded a great and rich hospital,[7] very finely built, and placed in it a hundred wet-nurses to suckle the babes, and now those who would hide their shame take their children there to be reared. The Venetians also obtained a Bull from the Pope that whosoever visited those children in hospital should gain certain pardons. Thus men and women can go there to visit their children, as if to gain pardons. Without doubt it was a very pious work, and it is held in great reverence.

In this city there is always a heavy penalty for anyone who carries arms under whatsoever pretext, and much less are arms suffered to be worn in the Council. The elders among the people are much honoured and reverenced, and when they have to elect a Doge they choose the man, without any partiality, who is best fitted for the dignity, provided that he is a noble by birth, and once he is elected they never deprive him of office, unless for some crime. They give him 8000 ducats for his maintenance which, be it understood, is for his family. All the other expenses of his estate are borne separately by the Seigniory, and he cannot exceed what is provided, nor can he condemn or release anyone without their consent.

The Venetians set great store by honest dealing, as I found by experience, and if any man is minded to break faith in money matters they would rather pay his bills of exchange for him than suffer him to default. I do not wonder that people who go about the world should observe this rule, since otherwise they could not travel with security. They have a custom to send each year a citizen of gentle birth to their cities on the mainland and in the gulf, and in the high seas and in distant parts every two years. It happened once that they sent the *podestà* to the island of Crete, which we

call Candia, and after a year they dispatched an investigator according to their custom, and he made strict enquiry and beheaded the *podestà* before leaving. Thus the provinces and the city are well controlled, and if a man be in any territory of theirs, although at the ends of the earth, yet it seems as if he were in Venice itself. The government is very mighty, and this is why the city is so prosperous. Its wealth is extraordinary. The citizens bring thither the products of the Levant in as great a profusion and abundance as they do those from the West, so that the whole world seems to be in their possession.

CHAPTER XXI

Departure from Venice.—An engagement between the Venetians and the Milanese.—Ferrara.—Pope Eugenius and the Emperor of the East.—A meeting of the Council.—The Marquis Niccolo.—Parma.—Piacenza.—Milan.—Duke Filippo Maria Visconti.—The government.

When I departed from Venice to go to the other Christian countries I left there the goods I had brought from the Levant, including the slaves, and my money, and all that I had purchased, in the charge of Messer Domenego Vent', a merchant of Venice, my very good friend, and took only the money which I thought sufficient for my needs. I took also bills of exchange on certain merchants in Bruges in Flanders, and departed in a boat, and slept the night of my departure at a place called Chioggia, which is founded in the sea like Venice, and is subject to it. There were certain burnt ships there, which had been lost in the battle when the Genoese came to that place to make war on the Venetians. The next morning we departed, and after four or five miles we entered the river Po, which is one of the greatest rivers in the world, and the arm by which I entered is one of three. The river is so large that many times, when the Venetians are at war with the Duke of Milan,[1] they both of them arm great fleets in it. The ships are the most wonderful I have ever seen. They are barques of great size and are flat-bottomed, so that they can float in shallow water. On the deck is a great castle of wood with a lofty tower, and in it they place ammunition for their artillery, such as bombards, culverins and the like. The rowers are below so that they cannot be attacked. These ships do not carry sails nor are they built for sailing,

since they would easily capsize. With these ships they fight mightily, and while I was there the Venetians set out with forty galleons against the Duke of Milan, intending to capture a city, and the Lombards came out to resist them, and they say that there was a great battle. The Lombards use a small kind of boat, called *galapago*,[2] completely covered with metal like a vault, and they use them to set fire to the others, and it is not possible to injure them. The Venetians, however, sent a man who dived under the water and swam to the enemy's ships, and bored holes in them with a drill, so that the Lombards lost three ships before they knew what was happening, while the Venetians lost four by fire. The battle continued for so long that the Venetians were beaten and lost sixteen galleons, and recovering what men they could, they retreated down the river and returned to the city. On this wise there is frequent warfare between the Venetians and the Lombards.

I continued my way along the river Po to a place called Francolino, which is on the mainland and belongs to the Marquis of Ferrara. Thence I came to Ferrara, where the Pope and the Emperor of Constantinople then were, with a great concourse of people who had assembled to witness the union of the Church with the Greeks.[3] The second day, well accompanied by the Castilians, I went to see Pope Eugenius, who received me very graciously. He desired to know the particulars of my journey to Jerusalem, and about the Sultan of Egypt, and the Grand Turk, also concerning the Emperor himself, what power he had, and I gave heed and then satisfied him to the best of my knowledge, and so I departed. That day in the evening I went to wait upon the Emperor of Greece, and gave him letters from his consort and from his brother the Despot. He received me gladly, saying that I was his kinsman and a native of his country. He drew me to him and

made me sit there beside him, asking me for news of his country and telling me that I must visit him each day I was there, and that it would give him much pleasure if I were to reside with him. Thus we were very familiar together. The Emperor was living in a palace belonging to the Marquis of Ferrara, on the waters of the Poatello, which they call Paradise, a very pleasant residence.

That day I took my leave and rested myself, and on the petition of the Castilians who were there I cut off my beard, which I wore very long, and clad after the manner of my country, I went again to see the Emperor. When he saw me he said that I had done wrong to cut off my beard, which is the greatest honour and dignity belonging to man. But I replied: "Lord, we hold the "contrary, and except in the case of some serious "injury we do not wear beards"; and we spoke upon the matter for some time. Then we returned to the affairs of Greece, and he enquired of me minutely concerning matters there, about his wife and brother, the condition of the country, and what the Grand Turk was doing, and as to my movements since I was there, and I told him everything I knew. That day the Emperor was to go to see the Pope, and I went with him. The Emperor had the gout and could not walk, and he was carried in a chair by certain men. The Pope received him very honourably, in a great hall which had been made ready. There were present with him a number of cardinals, archbishops and bishops, the Marquis of Ferrara and other lords of the country, and they were all in their seats. On the right hand was the chair of the Emperor of Germany with those of the kings and princes of Christendom, and on the left that of the Emperor of Greece, and of certain prelates. In the centre was the Pope's chair which was raised above the others. That day they remained three or four hours in council, conferring, it was said,

upon certain differences of faith between the Greeks and the Latins. Afterwards we departed, and the Pope entered into his chamber, while the Emperor returned to his palace accompanied by the members of his train. For he had brought from Greece a great company of people, all of whom went about in long robes and with great beards, showing themselves to be grave and serious persons. It was, indeed, a goodly company, but one had the impression that more were in attendance than was actually the case, although they say that at least a thousand persons were there.

The Emperor entered his palace, and all departed from him, but I remained and went in with him, and he made me dine at his table and showed me many kindnesses. Eight days later was the Feast of Corpus Christi, which the Pope and the Emperor, notwithstanding their magnificent attendance, celebrated in such manner that in a village of ten inhabitants it could not have been performed with more humility, only in view of the presence of so many strangers, the customary usages were altered. While I was there I saw two messengers who arrived on business with the Pope, one from the Duke of Burgundy, craving licence to hear Mass after noon, and the other from the Duke of Germany, craving leave to hear Mass before midnight.

The city of Ferrara is one of the pleasantest I have ever seen. It is of the same extent as Valladolid, but with very good houses and fine streets. It is well walled, with bastion and ditch, and there is a castle on one side above the river Po. It is very pleasant within, but more so without. The soil is rich, and round about are many fruit gardens. The city pays tribute to the Pope, and they say that he received at one time 100,000 or 150,000 ducats, but it grew less by degrees to 10,000 or 6,000, and now it is reduced to 3000, and I will presently relate the reason for this.

THE EMPEROR JOHN VIII PALAEOLOGUS
From Benozzo Gozzoli's fresco in the Chapel of the Riccardi Palace, Florence

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The Marquis of Ferrara is a native of France, and also, they say, of the lineage of Galalon,[4] and certain ceremonies are observed with him with the bread as with the others of the same descent, such as placing the loaf on the table upside down and then turning it over. They say that he came to the King of France to ask him to give him arms and release him from this custom, and the King provided the arms, but said that he could not grant the other request. This Marquis is a great lord and has for his inheritance many fine cities, towns and castles, with a revenue, it is said, of 300,000 ducats. He is very merry and handsome of person and very amorous. They say he has continuously ten or twelve concubines in certain of his palaces in the city. He must be a man of eighty years of age, small of stature and very fat. They say also that, being married to a daughter of a Duke of Germany,[5] his wife became enamoured of a son of his by another wife, and their love took such shape that the son forgot what he owed to his father, and the wife her duty to her husband, and they indulged their carnal appetites. The Marquis, learning of this from a servant, surprised them in the act of sin, and sent them to the judges of the country that they might deliberate what judgment should be executed upon them. Many lords of the country and elsewhere remonstrated with him, and even the Pope begged him to act mercifully, but to all he replied that he would neither order them to be killed nor spared, but that the judges must decide the matter. The judges gave sentence that they must both die, and the Marquis being present, they were immediately taken to the place of justice and there executed. It would take too long to describe all that happened. Then the Marquis had a galley prepared, and entered into it and sailed for Jerusalem. On his return he married a daughter of another Duke of Germany, a very beautiful girl of

fifteen, he being eighty, so that nothing can be looked for but another mischief greater than the first.

The Marquis has sons by this last wife who are infants. He has also a bastard, a youth of thirty, and a man of much virtue and a gallant knight in war. Seeing that Italy is never at peace, and that he must leave his dominions to those infant sons, who did not know how to govern and would certainly come to grief, the Marquis decided to leave all he possessed to the bastard. He, therefore, made him legitimate and constituted him his heir to everything, and made his people kiss his hand and take him as their ruler. The Pope also was consulted and gave his permission. The Marquis then ordered that there should be given to the eldest legitimate son, under oath, as his inheritance for ever, one half of the revenue, but not the government. I saw there one day a great festival in the palace to which came many nobles, both men and women, and there was a joust, and after it was finished all the ladies ran on foot in the lists. They had to run as far as a man could throw a stone. At the other end were three pieces of cloth, one of brocade, one of crimson velvet, and the third of cloth of scarlet. The first gained the brocade, the second the velvet, and the third the cloth of scarlet. But if the Garandilla de Alcudia[6] had been there she would have run the course three times over and won all the prizes.

The Marquis is a merry man, and it well appears that he is of French birth. I remained in this city twenty days, resting myself and preparing for my journey to Germany, and buying beasts for me and my people. When all was ready I went to take leave of the Emperor of Greece, and he begged me to visit him again before I returned to Spain, since I had to go back to Venice to fetch my goods, and I promised to do so. I departed from Ferrara and passed through the March to a city called Parma, which is on the

river Po and belongs to the Duke of Milan. There, passing the river, I found Nicolao Picherino,[7] the Duke's captain-general, with 20,000 horsemen, the finest body of men I have ever seen. They say that he was going to take Bologna, which belongs to the Pope. I remained three days at Parma to see them pass, and it was a most remarkable thing to see a body of men so finely armed and mounted, and so well found in everything necessary for war, and, what was best of all, with such a discreet and able captain at their head. In this city are the finest cherries I have ever seen.

From there I went to Piacenza, a city belonging to the same Duke, which is likewise a great city of 7000 or 8000 inhabitants. From there, the next day, I went to Milan, an immense city, and one of the greatest in Christendom. Indeed, in the opinion of many, it is the greatest. The city is indifferently walled, but there is a great moat with an excellent rampart, and within, the city is very well built and the streets are very fine. It is a grander sight and more interesting to see the city on a work-day than on a holiday. The streets and the houses of the armourers are most remarkable, as well as those of the spear-makers, the saddlers and the tailors who make the uniforms and materials for war. They know how many rulers and leaders of armies there are in Italy, and their devices, and they and the other craftsmen are so well provided that they can supply them with everything they need, though it be for the greatest lord in Italy. All the craftsmen are marvellously skilful and do their work with great regularity. There is in the city a palace where the Duke lives, which is a very notable residence and very large. Outside, it is defended by a great wall with a very strong bastion and a deep and capacious moat, through which the river runs, and from this they take much fish. The palace stands on level ground on one side of the city; indeed, in the whole of Lombardy there are no

houses built on rocks, but they are in no way less strong for being built in the plain, so well are they moated on all sides.

In this city there are many notable churches and monasteries, especially the chief church on which they are still at work, which they call the Duomo, a most sumptuous building. Here they say the Ambrosian Mass, which is the reverse of ours, and I am told also that they observe Lent differently. There is a very rich monastery of the Order of Preachers, in which St. Peter the Martyr is buried, who is believed to have met his death in this city. The Duke of Milan is a person who does not let himself be seen.[8] This, they say, is for fear of poison, but one day he was in a park there, and I saw him and had speech with him. He seemed to me to be a discreet person, grave and honest, of great stature, with a very long nose, and with his head shaved and uncovered. He was not well attended, and they say that he does not value any but men-at-arms. These he keeps in the field, and, indeed, he does well to value such men. This Duke has neither son nor daughter, only a bastard daughter married to the Count Francesco, who now is Duke of Milan.[9]

The city is without a rival in Christendom, in point of size, abundance, and in the number of its inhabitants, both nobles and artisans. They say that the Duke's revenue from the city itself, not counting the Church revenues, is 1000 ducats a day. No one can enter the city unless first, on entering the Duke's dominions, he obtains a certificate which establishes that he comes from a healthy country, uncontaminated by plague. This regulation is most rigidly enforced, and they say that it is now sixty years since there has been an outbreak of plague in any part of the country. I enquired concerning many things relating to the government of the city which is very well ordered. Much more is this the case in the Duke's household. They say that

those of his council can take money from no one but from him, and that when a council is necessary its deliberation is secured in this manner. A writing is sent to each councillor containing the particulars of the matter to be decided, and each one writes his opinion at the foot of the paper without consulting with his fellows. Indeed, anyone who does otherwise would suffer heavy penalties. Thus, reading the opinion of each councillor, the Duke adopts that which seems to him to be the wisest, and during his government his decisions have been much praised.

CHAPTER XXII

The route for Germany.—Crossing the Alps.—The St. Gothard Pass.—Basle.—The Baths.—Schaffhausen.—Washing for gold.—Strassburg.—Precautions against fire.—Mainz.—The Rhine.—Coblenz.—Arrival at Cologne.

I DEPARTED from Milan and set out for Germany, and as I came to no city worthy of mention I have nothing to relate, but I found many places burned and destroyed, which had been laid waste by the great Italian commander, Facino Cane.[1] The third day after leaving Milan I arrived at a German town which is called Luçerca,[2] but before I could enter it was necessary to load all the animals and baggage upon boats, and to cross a great lake which receives its waters from the Alps. The lake is very deep and quite four leagues across, and in it are multitudes of fish which are said to be very good to eat. This town must have about 1500 burghers. It is well walled and adorned with beautiful houses in the German manner, with stoves in them, and excellent inns, very abundantly provisioned.

The next day I departed and arrived at the foot of the St. Gothard pass, high up in the Alps, and the following day after the necessary preparations had been made we commenced the ascent. It was the end of August when the snow melts by reason of the great heat, and the crossing is therefore very perilous. The people in those parts have oxen which are accustomed to the way. One of these beasts goes in front drawing a long rope, and attached to the rope is a trailer which resembles a Castilian threshing machine.[3] On this the passenger sits, holding his horse behind him by the reins, and the crossing is thus safely accomplished,

for if anything untoward occurs, only the ox is imperilled. In passing along narrow ways, where the snow which covers the mountains on either side threatens to fall, the people discharge fire-arms so that the report may bring down any snow which is ready to be dislodged. For it happens at times that the snow becomes loosened and buries travellers. At this season the streams and rivers are much swollen by thaws. These mountains are thickly populated, and everywhere one comes upon inns and small hamlets. This day we climbed to the hermitage of St. Gothard, which lies almost in the sky, and even so there are other heights above, the summits of which, so the monks maintain, have never been seen, since they are perpetually shrouded in mist. From here one looks towards Italy, and anyone with sufficiently good sight can see the whole country, so high are the mountains and so flat and low is Italy in comparison. We now paid off our beasts and took the road to Basle through the mountains. Here there are numbers of martens and other creatures, as well as animals like goats, from which the people make chamois leather.

So continuing by those ways, and descending from the mountains and ridges, and travelling for a day along the plain, we reached the noble city of Basle.[4] The Council was then sitting, and a great company of people of all nationalities had assembled in the city. There were many notable personages from Spain, although the Alférez[5] had by that time departed. Nevertheless, the Cardinal of San Pedro, and the Bishop of Cuenca, the Bishop of Burgos, and others still remained. This town is situated upon the banks of the river which comes from the Alps and the Lake of Schaffhausen. The stream is of furious swiftness, and it happens frequently that the water sweeps down with it great blocks of ice, frozen as hard as stones, which destroy the buildings and bridges and everything

else in their way. The boatmen are in constant peril of striking some obstacle and of being dashed in pieces, although they are very skilful and wary. The boats travelling down the river never return, for they could not make headway against the current. Indeed, such is the pace with which they sweep downstream that it turns one giddy to behold them. In this river are many delicate and wholesome fish, including very large salmon.

The city of Basle is abundantly supplied with everything which Germany produces, and excellent wines and other beverages may be had there. It is well walled and delightfully built; the houses are of several storeys with high chimneys, and very pleasantly adorned with glass windows looking on to the street. Many of the buildings have towers on which are crosses and weather-cocks. The city is very pleasant to behold from within, and still more so from without. The streets are paved with stones, and are well supplied with drinking troughs. The churches and monasteries are indeed notable. The principal church is exceedingly well built, and there the Council holds its sessions. The inhabitants, both men and women, are very comely and rich. The city is self-governing, although it belongs to the Empire, and they say that the citizens owe no tribute to the Emperor except to entertain him at dinner when he is there, and to provide him with a pair of breeches, but he can summon them to war. The city has large and well-populated suburbs. Such multitudes of beggars had flocked to Basle from all parts of Germany, having been attracted thither by the Council, that they alone would fill a large city.

I heard that the Cardinal of San Pedro was in the Alps at the warm baths, which they call the Holy Baths, and about a mile distant is a notable monastery called Maria Stella,[6] where the Cardinal had resided for six months, since he did not desire to enter Basle for fear

of offending Pope Eugenius, but he transacted the business of the King, our Master, from that place. I went to see the Cardinal, who received me very graciously, and since I was still suffering from the wound which I received in Troy,[7] and which with travel seemed always to be getting worse, the Cardinal made me remain there in the care of a surgeon, and in twenty days I was cured. This surgeon is held in great esteem as well by the clergy as by laymen, and without doubt he deserves it, for he is a notable person of sovereign virtue and outstanding honesty. The monks regard him with special affection, for besides the good which he does them, he has made heating rooms for them and other contrivances for the service of the establishment, which is situated high up in the mountains in the coldest place in all Germany.

I went to see the bathing establishments where I found a great concourse of people, both sick persons and pilgrims who had come there under vows from afar. They think nothing of men and women bathing together quite naked, and it is the custom to play games and take their meals in the water. I met a lady there who was on pilgrimage for her brother, who had been taken prisoner in Turkey, and I frequently threw silver coins into the bath, and her maids dived for them and picked them up in their mouths. One can well imagine what it was they held in the air when they put down their heads. The people in general have excellent voices. Even the common people sing part songs with great skill, like trained artists.

As soon as I was cured of my wound I craved licence of the Cardinal, and returned to Basle in company with the lady I had encountered at the Baths, whom I did not leave until we reached the city of Cologne, where she had her estates. The first day, after leaving the Baths, we travelled by boat to a town where the

river falls from a place as high as two towers. The boatmen land their passengers and fasten the boat with long ropes so that it sweeps over the falls. Then, when it is in the water below, they secure it again, and the passengers having re-embarked, the boat shoots downstream with the force of the water, which runs very swiftly from the mountains. We thus arrived at Basle, and remained there six days, after which we departed.

We came next to a town where I saw, by the shore, a number of people washing gold from the sand of the river, and it was done in this wise. Close to the water was a table on a bench, with one of the supports by the water's edge, and the other raised on high. Upon this they placed pieces of wood, like steps, about the breadth of an arm. Then they shovelled the sand from the bank of the stream and cast it to the top of the table, and let it run down, so that a kind of white mud remained clinging to the steps. When sufficient had been collected they placed it in a trough which was close by, and filled it. The gold, being heavy, sank to the bottom, and as they lifted the mud with their hands one could see the gold shining below. But fortune does not favour them every day. From this gold they make the coins which are known as Rhenish guldens. On either bank of the river are cities, towns, and castles all close together, and many notable churches and monasteries, and there are so many leper-houses of St. Lazarus that it is a marvel to see them. It is said that these are necessary by reason of the fact that the people eat much fish, and drink very little wine and oil. They relate that not long ago the son of a Duke of Germany came with his wife, the daughter of another Duke, to sleep for a night at one of the leper-houses, and that the lepers tried to rape her, so that the husband was forced to kill her, and they killed the husband; and when it became known the parents set out and

burnt the house with those that were in it. But it would take much space to narrate all that happened.

The following day we arrived at the city of Strassburg, which is called in Latin Argentina, as if to say the town of silver, and, indeed, such is it that it must be one of the most delightful cities in the Christian world. The river flows by it and enters the streets. The city is strongly walled, with a deep ditch. It is very well built, with fine streets which are level and well-paved. There are many chimneys and stoves in the houses: the inns are excellent, and the churches and monasteries very noteworthy, especially the great church, a wonderful piece, with a stately tower in which is the clock, the finest I have ever seen. On the tower, above the clock, three men keep watch in turn all night, and each time the clock strikes they blow a horn like a shepherd's horn, but it makes more noise than a trumpet. They say that these men are placed there as a protection against fire, of which the people are much afraid. In each parish there are captains, and on an alarm of fire each man knows to which standard he belongs, and everything proceeds in an orderly manner. Some bring sacks of straw, others pails of water, hatchets, iron-hooks and long pikes, so that help is immediately at hand. One night I went to see the companies turn out, and certainly it is a remarkable thing to see the order which is preserved. This city is indeed notable.

We now departed for Mainz, and on the left as one goes is a seat of chalk and stone, very lofty, where they elect the Emperor.[8] He is forced to come here and to wait thirty days to see if anyone opposes him, and it has happened on occasions that a rival did appear, who sat himself in that seat and supplanted the other. This is a ceremony imposed upon candidates so that all may see that the choice is publicly made. We came then to the city of Mainz, which is very large and

closely populated, and well-provisioned and wealthy. It is one of the great Arch-bishoprics of Germany. Its churches and monasteries are very fine, and the inhabitants are exceedingly comely. We remained there two days and departed for Cologne. In truth, the Rhine is so lovely that the world cannot show the like. On one hand and on the other are such stately towns, and so many castles, and so much beauty that a man can hardly dare to describe what he sees. Towns and castles are all crowded closely together and the towers are adorned with lofty crosses and gilded weather-vanes.

So by this river we arrived at a city called Coblenz, a notable place. Opposite the city, on the other side of the river, lie the towers and castle of the lord of Hanesberque,[9] a knight who set out once on pilgrimage to Santiago and was captured and taken to Burgos. Nor was he released until such time as certain merchants of Burgos, who were detained in Germany, were allowed to return to Castile. Thus it happened and he was set at liberty. But as he was returning home, he fell into the hands of Count Ferdinand of Villandrando, who held him to ransom, so that his pilgrimage was in truth an unlucky one. I was advised to pass speedily so as to avoid any injury on the part of that lord, which I accordingly did. During all this time I had in my company the lady whom, as I have related, I encountered in the Baths. I now took my departure and slept in the great and noble city of Cologne, where that lady had her dwelling, and she invited me to her house and showed me much honour all the time I was there, which was eight days. The following day that lord of Hanesberque sent one of his sons to me with certain squires to ask me to go to his lands, where I should find pleasure and rest. Further, that I should not believe what was told me concerning his intentions, for he desired to make peace with the Castilians, who

had done no more than their duty, and that it was far from his desire that those who came there should suffer on his account. They also said that the Emperor had sent word to his palace, commanding him to entertain any knights who came there. I thanked him much for his good will, but said that I had to repair with all speed to the Duke of Burgundy, and then to return to the Council, but that another time I would visit him, and so I took my leave.

CHAPTER XXIII

Cologne.—The Inns.—Archbishop Dietrich von Mörs.—The Cathedral.—A miracle in the Chapel of the Three Kings.—The Fair.—Journey down the Rhine.—The Duke of Cleves.—Nymegen.—Bois-le-duc.—Lila.—Malines.—Brussels.—Duke Philip the Good.—A hospitable Abbess.

I REMAINED in this city of Cologne in great contentment, and replaced my beasts, since those I had brought with me were fatigued. This is the richest and the most beautiful city in all Germany. On one side is the Rhine, and on the other are great fields and meadows, such as are commonly found in Germany. The city is well walled, with a good and deep ditch. The streets are pleasant, and there are numbers of artisans engaged in trades of all kinds. The houses are beautiful within the city, but there are many more on the outskirts. The inns are excellent, worthy to entertain a king if needs be. It is customary for a number of gentlemen to bind themselves together to found an inn, each one putting down a sum of money, and receiving a share of the profits in proportion to his contribution. They then choose as host a man of parts and of noble birth, for they say that a good host befits good guests. It happens not infrequently that a gentleman, desiring through age to retire from the world, comes to an innkeeper and bargains with him for the rest of his life. He has a room, a bed, two large and two small meals, and money for Mass, and having paid his due, he lives without care for the rest of his days. There are other matters of note in connection with the inns here, which would take too long to relate, for, as I understand, there is much traffic in them and careful management, and the entertainment is excellent.

In this city a great lord is Archbishop,[1] great by reason of his office and by birth, for he is the son of a Duke, but he seems, in my judgment, to be more apt for a secular than an ecclesiastical calling. He was most hospitable and gracious to me, and I was as familiar with him as if I had been born there. He rode about the city with me and showed me the churches and monasteries, and the palaces of the lords and of the ladies, whom, as it seems to me, he did not wholly disdain. The great church is very remarkable, and a most sumptuous edifice, upon which they are still constantly at work. In the centre of the largest chapel is a smaller shrine enclosed with iron railings, where lie the Three Kings, and they say that a few days previously a great miracle happened there, and it was in this wise. The chapel was completed except for a great stone with which to roof it, and as they were lifting this ready to place it in position, it leapt from the ropes just above the place where the bodies of the Kings were lying. The shrine thereupon moved itself as much as one pace to the side, and the stone fell beside it. The three bodies are preserved so that all can see them from head to feet. They are quite intact, and are without doubt very holy relics, wherefore they are richly adorned and looked upon with the greatest devotion. There is in this city a nunnery where lies the virgin St. Ursula, with the eleven thousand virgins who died with her, and it was here that she received her martyrdom. It is a great nunnery, and a famous place of pilgrimage. While I was in the city the fair was being held, and much merchandise had been brought there, in particular a number of English horses, trotters and hackneys, which pleased me greatly. The Germans are a very diligent people and, as I have said, they are specially skilled in handicrafts.

Leaving Cologne I travelled down the Rhine until I came to a town belonging to the Duke of Cleves,[2]

father of the Princess of Navarre who is married to a sister of the Duke of Burgundy, a mighty lord of lands and dues, but the best of them he took from his neighbours, as they say, by personal prowess. The Duke received me very graciously and entertained me well, and had his device shown to me, and I learned the conditions attached to it, but they seemed to me to be too onerous, and because the Pope had absolved me from the vow attached to that one I already bore, I could not consent to wear it.

I departed from that lord, and lower down the Rhine, on the right hand, I came to a town called Nymegen, that is to say, New May. It was founded by Julius Caesar, and there is a stone there with the whole story inscribed on it. This town belongs to the Duke of Guelders[3], who is a great lord and even richer than the one I had just left. He is married to a daughter of the Duke of Burgundy. This town is in every way the most beautiful that I have seen. It is very strong, being built on the rocks behind a strong wall and moat. I was there three days and saw the Duke, who was a league out of the town in a palace which he has in the country for riding and hunting. He received me very kindly, and I saw there the Duchess and their sons and daughters, and they desired me to dine with them, and in the evening I took my leave and returned to the town. The next day I departed and arrived at a large town called Bois-le-duc, which is in Brabant and belongs to the Duke of Burgundy. It is a very remarkable place, although not well populated. The river runs into the town in many places, and they breed as many swans as there are geese in Castile. They say that the Duke of Burgundy orders them to be distributed among the people, who bring up the birds and have to render an account of them, and on feast days they are eaten and esteemed to be a great luxury. I purchased a horse here for sixteen ducats which

would, without doubt, have fetched a hundred at home.

I now departed for Lila,[4] which is likewise in Brabant and belongs also to the Duke of Burgundy. It is a very pleasant town. The people here are accustomed to travel in carts, but I could not suffer it, for I would far rather be at sea. I continued to ride, while my people followed in the carts. The greater part of this district is dotted at intervals with wind-mills, and instead of wood they burn sods of earth like bricks. They cut them in the summer, each one from his land, and dry them in the sun and keep them until winter. These sods make a pleasant fire and are said to be very healthy. There is very little wine, and the people drink beer, as the water is bad.

I departed from Lila and came to Malines, which the Castilians call Mellinas, and although it is small, I have never seen, before or since, such a charming place. The Duke delights greatly to come here to rest, as one retiring to a garden. He has no palace in the town, but he lies at an inn, which is so excellent that it is fit to entertain, not him alone, but the greatest prince on earth. I remained in the town two days, and had great pleasure there by reason of its charm and beauty. I then left for Brussels, which is also in Brabant, and there I found the Duke of Burgundy and the Duchess, his consort,[5] to whom I made my reverence. They received me very graciously, the Duke on account of his French descent and the love which he bears to the Castilians, and the Duchess by reason of her Spanish origin and her relationship with our Master, King Juan, whose cousin she is. The Duke ordered me to be lodged and provided with everything that was needful for me and mine, and I was soon comfortably bestowed.

The next day I repaired to the palace of the Duke whom I found at Mass. Afterwards I enquired for

the Bastard of St. Pol[6] and I joined myself to him, and greeted him from Gutierre Quixada, who was under obligation to fight a duel with him, and whom I had seen embarking for Jerusalem. He sent word to say that he would shortly return to accomplish his undertaking, and he commended himself to the Bastard. The Duke drew near and heard this and said that it was a fine thing that Mosen Gutierre had done, to go to Jerusalem with intent to return to kill or dishonour his comrade, and that such a journey would be better undertaken after the duel. All this was said by way of jest. From that day onwards the Bastard paid me great attention as if I had been his closest kinsman. He is a gracious knight and a man of honour, and by his personal valour he has advanced himself more than many others of greater estate, who are far less respected by the Duke and Duchess and all the ladies. He is as gentle as he is brave, and in token of his virtue and integrity the Duke has bestowed on him the Order of the Golden Fleece. Until then neither minor nor bastard had ever received the Order, but seeing that this knight was so valiant and gracious, the Duke and the electors of the Order had to bestow it. They say that the one which he wears is that which was forfeited by the lord of Tremouille, who ran away in battle. The Bastard is graceful in person and body, of good stature, a man both discreet and adroit. He is fifty-five years old, thin and somewhat sallow, and has a wound on the face which he received in battle, when he was taken prisoner. Afterwards he was ransomed for a large sum which was paid by the Regent, mother of the Duke of Burgundy, who they say loves him very dearly.

This knight showed me the Duke's palace as well as the city and everything in it, but nothing could surpass in majesty the persons of the Duke and Duchess and the state in which they live, which is the most splendid

A TOURNAMENT
From a Flemish Calendar of the 15th or early 16th century

[*face p. 194*

I have ever seen. At that time the following great persons were housed in the palace, to wit, the Duke of St. Pol, a mighty lord, with his wife and retainers, the Count of Estampes, likewise a great lord, with his followers, and the Princess of Navarre, a niece of the Duke, who keeps a separate establishment, also John of Cleves her brother, and two gentlemen, by name de Charni and de Crequi, with their wives, as well as many knights of the Duke's household. They say that there are two hundred maids of honour continually in attendance on the Duchess, all of whom sleep and eat in the palace, as do also the knights who have no separate establishments, and the Duke pays all the expenses as if for his own person. In this he appears to me to be the opposite of the Duke of Milan; the one keeps all the men he can in the field and none with him, and the other keeps all with him and none in the field, but the Duke of Burgundy can safely retain his knights at court, for he enjoys good peace. The multitude of people and their refinement and splendour can scarcely be described. There is a constant succession of tourneys and everything that makes for pleasure.

The Duke is a very noble person, of great virtue, and very gracious in his bearing, and comely. He is tall, though slight, and as gallant as may be. He is about fifty-five years of age. The Duchess is extremely well spoken of. She is much loved by her subjects, and still more by her consort. They have but one son.[7] I saw at the court two blind men from Castile who played the guitar, and later I met them again here in Castile. While I was there the Duke sent for me many times, and enquired as to the places I had visited, and by repeated questions desired to be exactly informed concerning all that I had seen and done. He showed great pleasure at what I told him, giving me to understand the longing which he had to make the conquest

of Jerusalem; at least so it appeared to me from his enquiries. He asked me whether I desired to continue my journey, or if it pleased me to remain at his court. I replied that having visited his country and Paris, I must speedily return to Castile, for I knew that the King, my Master, wished to wage war in person against the Moors, and he took it in good part, and ordered the Bastard of St. Pol to bear me company and, when I desired to depart, to escort me through his dominions; further, that if it was necessary he would give me letters of recommendation, which pleased me greatly. Afterwards we went to see the city, which is large and rich, with beautiful houses, and in the centre of a square is the Hotel de Ville, where the Council meets, which has no equal. We went also outside the city to see certain estates belonging to the Duke, whither he retires for his pleasure, among which was one with a very fine house and a great enclosed park, about a league in circumference, where are many deer and other wild creatures.

I departed from Brussels in company with a knight, the captain of Sluys, to whom the Bastard had recommended me, and we arrived that day for dinner at a town where there was not a drop of wine to be had, and I proposed that we should go on to Bruges where we should certainly find some, but the knight informed me that a lady, a kinswoman of his, was abbess of a convent close by, and that he would send to enquire if she had any wine, and this he accordingly did. The abbess sent a message that she had wine in plenty, but that she would not produce it unless he came to dine with her, and brought with him the Spanish knight who was his companion. We therefore presented ourselves, and were very pleasantly received and exceedingly well entertained. After dinner the abbess told me that she had been on pilgrimage to Santiago, and had received such honourable treatment from the

Castilians that she scarcely knew how to repay it. She thereupon begged me to remain some days there to refresh myself after the fatigue of my journey, and told me that she would treat me as her own son, but I thanked her and took my leave. We then set out for Bruges, where we arrived at Vespers and lodged at the *Angel*, and the captain of Sluys, who was with me, departed to his place, having invited me to visit him there and take my pleasure with him, which I promised to do.

CHAPTER XXIV

Bruges.—Arras.—Ghent.—Antwerp.

This city of Bruges[1] is a large and very wealthy city, and one of the greatest markets of the world. It is said that two cities compete with each other for commercial supremacy, Bruges in Flanders in the West, and Venice in the East. It seems to me, however, and many agree with my opinion, that there is much more commercial activity in Bruges than in Venice. The reason is as follows. In the whole of the West there is no other great mercantile centre except Bruges, although England does some trade, and thither repair all the nations of the world, and they say that at times the number of ships sailing from the harbour of Bruges exceeds seven hundred a day. In Venice, on the contrary, be it never so rich, the only persons engaged in trade are the inhabitants. The city of Bruges is in the territory of the Count of Flanders, and is the chief city. It is well peopled, with fine houses and streets, which are all inhabited by work people, very beautiful churches and monasteries, and excellent inns. It is very strictly governed, both in respect of justice as in other matters. Goods are brought there from England, Germany, Brabant, Holland, Zeeland, Burgundy, Picardy, and the greater part of France, and it appears to be the port for all these countries, and the market to which they bring their goods in order to sell them to others, as if they had plenty at home.

The inhabitants are extraordinarily industrious, possibly on account of the barrenness of the soil, since very little corn is grown, and no wine, nor is there water fit for drinking, nor any fruit. On this account the products of the whole world are brought here, so

that they have everything in abundance, in exchange for the work of their hands. From this place is sent forth the merchandise of the world, woollen cloths and Arras cloths, all kinds of carpets, and many other things necessary to mankind, of which there is here a great abundance. There is a large building above a great tract of water which comes from the sea at Sluys, which is called *la Hala*.[2] Here all goods are unloaded in the following manner. In these parts of the West the sea rises and falls greatly, and between Bruges and Sluys, a distance of two and a half leagues, there is a great canal, as great and as deep as a river, and at different places sluice-gates, as of water mills, are set up, which when opened admit the water, and on being closed the water cannot escape. When the tide rises the ships are laden and travel with their cargoes from Sluys on the tide. When the water has reached its highest point they lock it up, and those ships which have been unloaded and filled with fresh cargoes return with the same water which carried them up-stream, travelling down again with the falling tide. Thus the people by their industry make use of the water, carrying great quantities of goods to and fro, the transport of which, if they had to use beasts, would be exceedingly costly and troublesome.

This city of Bruges has a very large revenue, and the inhabitants are very wealthy. Recently they rebelled against the Duke,[3] at a time when he was in the city, so that he had to flee with his wife and attendants. He then armed himself, and made war against it and took it by force, and took great vengeance upon it, both in the matter of lives and property. I myself saw many high gallows around Bruges, and from there to Sluys, and around Sluys, upon which were fixed the heads of dead men. The people of this part of the country are exceedingly fastidious in their apparel, very extravagant in their food, and much given to all

kinds of luxury. They say that in that *Hala*, the women who were so minded had licence that any who so pleased might go and remain there at night, and the men who resorted there might bring any woman they chose and lie with her, on condition that no one should endeavour to see her, nor to know who she was, and that any who should do so should be deserving of death. The bathing of men and women together they take to be as honeſt as church-going with us. Without doubt, the goddess of luxury has great power there, but it is not a place for poor men, who would be badly received. But anyone who has money, and wishes to spend it, will find in this town alone everything which the whole world produces. I saw there oranges and lemons from Caſtile, which seemed only juſt to have been gathered from the trees, fruits and wine from Greece, as abundant as in that country. I saw also confections and spices from Alexandria, and all the Levant, juſt as if one were there; furs from the Black Sea, as if they had been produced in the diſtrict. Here was all Italy with its brocades, silks and armour, and everything which is made there; and, indeed, there is no part of the world whose products are not found here at their beſt. There was a great famine in the year of my visit

I departed to see Sluys,[4] which is the seaport of Bruges, and lodged with the captain. As I was in the church hearing Mass, a woman approached me and said that she had something to communicate to me in private which would be to my advantage. She took me to her home close by, and she there showed me two young girls and offered me the one who should please me moſt. Aſtounded, I enquired of her how she could bring herself to behave thus, whereupon she told me that she was almoſt dead with hunger, having had nothing to eat for many days except a few small fish, and that the two girls were like to die of starvation and

that they were virgins. I extracted from the woman and the girls a solemn oath that they would never again attempt such traffic with anyone. The new year, I said, would bring an improvement in their fortunes, and that which I was about to give them would suffice to provide for all three. I then gave the woman six Venetian ducats, and departed. The famine was the worst which had ever been known, and it was followed by a dreadful plague which devastated many places.

I remained there with the captain for two days and saw the place. It numbers more than fifteen hundred burghers, and is strongly fortified with a wall and moat and so crowded with foreigners and their wares that the houses are insufficient to shelter them. I met there many Castilians, and people of other nations known to me. The harbour of this town is said to be very difficult to enter, on account of the sand banks, but, once inside, the ships are very secure and with the tide they can reach the town walls. At low tide many of them lie aground, but on such soft deep sands that they are as well placed as on the water. The harbour looks as if half the world had armed itself to attack the town, so great a fleet of ships of all kinds is always at anchor here: caracks, sloops from Germany, galleys from Italy, barques, whalers, and many other kinds of vessels according to the different countries, and even if the people are enemies among themselves they do not show their enmity either in the harbour or on land, but everyone goes his way and does his business. Anyone acting otherwise is severely punished. One can see there all the nations of the world eating at a common table without disputing. I remained two days at Sluys with the captain, and then returned to Bruges.

I now travelled through Picardy to a city called Arras, which belongs to the Duke of Burgundy. It is a pleasant place, and very rich, especially by reason of its woven cloths and all kinds of tapestries, and

although they are also made in other places, yet it well appears that those which are made in Arras have the preference. The negotiations for the peace between the King of France and the Duke of Burgundy took place here. I remained three days in the city and intended to pass on to Normandy to see Rouen, and thence to go to Paris, but the plague was so severe that I was forced to change my route, and to return to Bruges in Flanders. I had certain money with bankers there, and went to obtain it from them, but I found that the merchants had all gone to Antwerp to the fair. I remained, therefore, one day only in Bruges and then departed, and in two days I arrived at Ghent which is likewise in the County of Flanders.

Ghent is one of the greateſt cities in the Chriſtian world; it is very ſtrongly fortified in every way although ſituated in a plain, for it is well walled, with a high rampart and moats, in such a way that none can attack it except at a great diſtance. It is also well furnished with arms and all kinds of artillery. They say that by law each inhabitant muſt have his own armour and a lance, and that 60,000 footmen can be put into the field, but whether this be so or not, it is said that there are sufficient provisions in the city for six years, and every year they are renewed. Since I was there the people have had a quarrel with the Duke, their ruler,[5] and he came againſt them and blockaded the city, which held out for a long time, but at laſt he took it and executed great vengeance. It is said that the citizens had to come unclad in their shirts to ask pardon, and they submitted to many things to show their subjection, and so he departed. But the undertaking coſt the Duke much labour, and he loſt his goods and one of his sons. Messer Jaques de la Ben who warred in Caſtile died there also of a wound from a piece of ordnance. The city is very large and populous and very wealthy by reason of its trade, for the water reaches

to the walls and many ships enter there. A great deal more might be said concerning this city, but I do not wish to enlarge upon it and grow tedious with much writing.

I departed from Ghent and came to the city of Antwerp, which is in Brabant and belongs to the Duke of Burgundy. It is large, and has about 6000 burghers. There is also an excellent wall with a rampart and a moat. The houses and streets are very fine and it has a good harbour. The ships enter by a river so that the galleys can be fastened to the city walls. The fair[6] which is held here is the largest in the whole world, and anyone desiring to see all Christendom, or the greater part of it, assembled in one place can do so here. The Duke of Burgundy comes always to the fair, which is the reason why so much splendour is to be seen at his court. For here come many and divers people, the Germans, who are near neighbours, likewise the English. The French attend also in great numbers, for they take much away and bring much. Hungarians and Prussians enrich the fair with their horses. The Italians are here also. I saw there ships as well as galleys from Venice, Florence and Genoa. As for the Spaniards they are as numerous, or more numerous, at Antwerp than anywhere else. I met merchants from Burgos who were settled in Bruges, and in the city I found also Juan de Morillo, a servant of our King.

As a market Antwerp is quite unmatched. Here are riches and the best entertainment, and the order which is preserved in matters of traffic is remarkable. Pictures of all kinds are sold in the monastery of St. Francis; in the church of St. John they sell the cloths of Arras; in a Dominican monastery all kinds of goldsmith's work, and thus the various articles are distributed among the monasteries and churches, and the rest is sold in the streets. Outside the city at one

of the gates is a great street with large stables and other buildings on either side of it. Here they sell hackneys, trotters and other horses, a most remarkable sight, and, indeed, there is nothing which one could desire which is not found here in abundance. I do not know how to describe so great a fair as this. I have seen other fairs, at Geneva in Savoy, at Frankfurt in Germany, and at Medina in Castile, but all these together are not to be compared with Antwerp.

CHAPTER XXV

Louvain.—Bois-le-duc.—Nymegen.—Frankfurt.—Cologne.—Mainz.—The travellers are kidnapped and released.—Tafur loses his sword.—Basle.—A tourney at Schaffhausen.—Constance.—Ulm.—Nördlingen.—Kaspar Schlick.—Nuremberg.—Prague.—The Margrave of Meissen.

I DEPARTED from Antwerp and came to the city of Louvain, which is in Brabant. It is a very great place, but much de-populated. Here is a very notable university for the study of all sciences, but they say that theology is taught more than the others. I saw there two bastard sons of the Duke of Burgundy who were studying philosophy. One of them afterwards became a valiant man of arms, and fell, as I have related, at the blockade of Ghent. I left Louvain and came to Bois-le-duc, where I had already been, and from there I travelled to Nymegen, which, as I have said, belongs to the Duchy of Guelders; from there I passed on to the Duchy of Cleves and came to Frankfurt. It was the time of the fair which is very noteworthy, as I have said, but not equal to that at Antwerp. The city is very well provisioned, and has 4000 burghers, and the fair brings it much wealth. Frankfurt is situated in the middle of Germany and is chiefly notable, as it seemed to me, for its beasts. I remained there three days, and departed and returned to Cologne. I visited the Archbishop, as I had promised, and he received me most graciously.

At Cologne I fell in with an embassy which was returning to Basle from the Duke of Burgundy, a goodly company dispatched by the Council to the Duke, to endeavour to persuade him to take sides with the Council, and to throw off his allegiance to the Pope,

whom he had hitherto supported. There were three prelates in the embassy, one was the Bishop of Viseo, in Portugal, the second was a German, the third was Ludovico, the greatest scholar of his age and protonotary of the Pope. It happened that through my acquaintance with the Bishop of Viseo, whom I had encountered in the island of Chios[1] in Greece, whither he had gone to receive the Emperor of Constantinople, I was obliged to return in his company as far as Basle. When we came to Mainz the ambassadors sent at once to Duke Stephen of Bavaria[2] for a safe-conduct, since the Duke was tutor to his nephew Duke Ludwig who was lord of all that country. This was because the Duke was a supporter of Pope Eugenius. Nevertheless, in due course he sent his safe-conduct and we departed from Mainz, but about three leagues from there we were set upon by some 200 horsemen, who took captive the ambassadors, and me with them, and they carried us to a castle in a mountain, called Livantane [Laubenheim], and this with great discourtesy. But, as for me, seeing I was a knight, no one approached me, but they sent for a knight who took my sword and spurs from me. For a whole fortnight they kept us in captivity, but at least there was no likelihood of death from want. On the contrary, at night and break of day, indeed at all hours of the day, we were forced to eat and drink with our guards, as is the custom there, which was quite strange to us and became us very ill. I sent at once to Duke Stephen to tell him who I was, and the manner of my coming, and demanded to be released. He complied by sending one of his kinsmen to deliver me from prison, and when I was at liberty I desired to see and have speech with my companions, but this was denied me, since they kept each one of us apart.

As soon as I was free of the castle I rode with my people to Duke Stephen, who was in a town a league

from there, and spoke with him, demanding the release of my companions. I told him that if he did not set them free at once he would lose not only his own goods, but also the estates of his nephew which were in his charge. While I was there news came that his nephew's people had risen against the Duke, saying that he had dishonoured his nephew and violated his safe-conduct. Whereupon the Duke asked me to return to the ambassadors to try to make peace with them, saying that he was anxious to set them free, but that they must agree not to make complaint to the Council or to the Emperor. He sent also to the messengers, who came to him, to inform them that he had liberated the ambassadors and had shown them much honour. I then departed with one of his kinsmen and returned to the place where the ambassadors were imprisoned, and had speech with them, and they were very pleased at what I had done and readily consented to the conditions, and they were set at liberty and had restitution of all that was taken from them, so that nothing was lost. But, to my amazement, my sword, which had been taken from me when I was captured, could not be found. They offered me one belonging to the Duke, but I scorned to take it, swearing that I would never wear any but my own, and that the Duke's country should pay dearly for the injury done to me in the face of his safe-conduct.

With this we departed, the ambassadors and I, through the lands of that Duke Ludwig, where they showed us much honour and would not suffer us to pay for anything. But just as we were about to leave his dominions, a squire from the Duke rode up and begged me to make an end of my wrath, since what had happened had been directed not against me, but against the ambassadors, and they brought me my sword, and told me that it had cost the Duke more labour to recover it than to capture a city. So we

departed from the country of those lords, both uncle and nephew, and returned to Strassburg and continued our journey, taking with us from each city an armed escort for our protection, in view of the contending factions and the disputes between the Pope and the Council. We thus returned to Basle, where we found again the ambassadors from the King, our Master, whom I had seen before.

Departing in due course from Basle, I came to a town called Schaffhausen which lies on the Upper Rhine. It is small, but pleasant and very clean. A grand tourney was being celebrated there, which the nobles had arranged in this manner. Certain knights gathered together and made a list of all the noblemen in the district, and they caused a painter to paint the coats of arms of each one, which a herald carried from house to house, presenting the shield and giving notice that on a certain day every nobleman should present himself in that place, fully equipped with arms and horses, to take part in a tournament. They gave notice also to all the great ladies in those parts. Then the nobles and ladies assembled at their own cost, and when all were gathered together the elders went apart with certain matrons and took counsel, and enquired whether any nobleman had done ought amiss, whether any had forced or dishonoured matron or maid, or had seized the goods of a minor who had no protector, or had debased himself for greed of money by marrying a woman of low birth, or had otherwise degraded his rank. Thus the misdeeds of each were brought to light, and when any culprit was found they provided as follows. Certain knights were summoned, and when such an one appeared in the lists, they were ordered to fall upon him and beat him with rods and drive him thence. This was done, and afterwards the older knights and ladies drew near to the culprit and told him why he had been beaten. Then they escorted him

back and allowed him to take his place with the other noblemen in the tourney, as if he had purged his offence and done his penance. But if he refused to attend he was sentenced to a double punishment, and if, after a third summons, he still remained obdurate, he was no longer regarded as a noble since he had refused to joust with his peers. In these parts all can joust and join in any knightly sports, but only nobles of known escutcheon can take part in the tourney. This is a good and worthy custom, since thereby everyone knows who can lay claim to chivalry and high lineage, and those who have been guilty of base deeds may be brought to shame. I was bidden to join with the other nobles and witnessed the rejoicings.

I remained at Schaffhausen two days, and departed and came to Constance, where an earlier Council had been held[3] concerning the healing of the differences in the Church, and Fernand Perez de Ayala, and the Alcalde de los Donçeles were the Castilian ambassadors. Here I met the Cardinal of San Pedro who was then dwelling there. I remained with him eight days, taking much pleasure and admiring the city, which is indeed a fine place to see. There are delightful houses, streets, churches and monasteries, and excellent inns and lodging houses. It must always have been a noble city, but it is much finer since the Council was held there. A lake of sweet water flows up to the walls, which comes from the Alps. This lake is five or six leagues in length and of equal breadth. It is very deep, and many great caracks could float in it. It contains an abundance of fish, which are said to be very good to eat. In the lake are a number of islands, where are hermitages and a convent. Vast supplies of provisions come in by that lake, to which the city owes much of its prosperity. The suburbs are very extensive. I saw there the most beautiful woman it has ever been my lot to see. So great was her beauty that I doubted

if she could be really human. If she was as good as she was beautiful, they should make much of her in Paradise. It was here in the cathedral church that the Council held its sittings, and it happened that King Fernando of Aragon died at that time, and there were grand obsequies in this church as befits a King, and the whole church is painted with the arms of Aragon.

I now took leave of the Cardinal, and departed to see the Emperor who was in Bohemia, and travelling through Upper Germany I came to Ulm, which we call Olmos, where they make the fustians which are named after it. The city is pleasantly situated and charmingly built. It is an Imperial city, which signifies that justice and revenue and all things belong to the Emperor. Half a league from there runs the Danube, which flows into the Black Sea. I departed from this city and came to Nördlingen, which town was then at strife with a lord in the vicinity, and they gave me an escort through the dangerous country. I then arrived at the city of Nuremberg, where I encountered many people, ambassadors from the Pope, and the Cardinal of Santa Cruz, and many other prelates, among them the present Cardinal of San Sisto, who was then called Brother Juan de Torquemada.[4] On the side of the Council were the Cardinal of Arles and many other prelates, including Magister Juan de Segovia, professor of theology, and for the Emperor there were Kaspar Schlick,[5] vice-chancellor, and many lords and learned men. I was obliged to remain there until the Diet was finished and they were ready to depart, in order to travel farther with Kaspar Schlick, who was on his way to the Emperor in Bohemia, for otherwise I could not have travelled without grave peril of death. The Castilians who were there recommended me to him, and he was pleased to take me in his train. There had come with him the son of a Count whom I knew in Castile, in the Moorish wars on the frontier

of Jaen, and who was knighted in Cambil. He had fled to Spain from his father who wished to make a bishop of him, as he had an elder brother, but on his return to Germany he found his father and brother both dead, and he inherited the estates with a rental of 20,000 ducats. His name was Patendorf. From this knight I received many kindnesses, as well by the way as in the Emperor's household.[6]

This city of Nuremberg is one of the greatest and richest in Germany. It is a very ancient city and has about the same population as Toledo, which city it resembles in size and situation. There are many workpeople in the place, especially metal workers. They make the coats of mail which are called after the city. There is a church where the Emperor Charlemagne placed the relics which he brought from the Holy Land when he took Jerusalem, and I went with the Cardinals to see them. They showed me many relics, among them a lance of steel of the length of an ell, and they told us that it was the very lance which pierced Our Lord's side, but I said that I had seen the real one in Constantinople, and I believe that if the great people had not been with me, I should have been in peril from the Germans for what I said. This city is very wealthy, and although situated inland it is full of merchandise. When the ambassadors had finished their labours, each returned to his home, and I went with the Germans to the confines of Bohemia, to a town called Eger, in which the Emperor Sigismund had bestowed on Kaspar Schlick all the chief offices, and here he had his wife. We remained in the town six days, during which time he celebrated the marriage of one of his brothers, and many great people were there from Germany and Bohemia, and there were joustings and tourneys and great celebrations.

We departed from Nuremberg, and travelling through Bohemia we came to the city of Prague, but

we could not meet with the Emperor, who had departed for Silesia on the confines of Poland, where he was waging war with the Polish King. Prague is a very ancient and notable city and very rich, although it has declined since the Bohemians became heretics. It also appears to me that the heresy has in no way been exterminated, for there are mountains and lofty strongholds belonging to the Taborites, and a castle which they call Tabor. The people persist still in their errors, and the greater part of the kingdom sides with them, especially the women, for there is community of wives, but I believe it is to satisfy their lusts, as I also heard. Prague is divided into two parts, the one they call Old Prague, and the other New Prague,[7] and between the two runs a great river, crossed by a bridge which leads from one to the other. There is here a famous university for the study of all the sciences, particularly theology. We remained for two days, and departing from the city we travelled through Bohemia to its farthermost limits. Between Germany and Bohemia there rises, like a wall, a high and thickly-wooded range of mountains, over which one can neither ride nor walk, except by specified routes. Leaving Bohemia we entered Germany and came to a town belonging to the Margrave of Meissen, Duke of Saxony,[8] who is now married to the sister of the Emperor Frederick. It was then about a fortnight since he had fought a battle with the Bohemian heretics and had defeated them, and had taken much spoil and 1000 prisoners, including 100 nobles. This lord received me well and showed me much courtesy, and Kaspar Schlick remained there with him three days. We then departed, travelling through Germany, and saw many places and churches in ruins, which had been destroyed by the King of Poland while the Emperor was at war with the Bohemians, so that he had to cease hostilities there and march straightway against the Poles.

CHAPTER XXVI

Breslau.—The Emperor Albert II.—Life at court.—The King of Poland. —Breslau in winter.

THREE days before Christmas we arrived at Breslau, in Silesia, on the very outskirts of Germany. There we found the Emperor Albert,[1] accompanied by many dukes, counts, and other great men, and prelates, as well from Germany as from Hungary and Bohemia. A knight of the Prussian Order was there also with many soldiers sent by the Grand Master. The Emperor had in addition a great army with him, for he was in the field, and had need of them, being at war with a numerous and valiant foe. But, as I learnt, the fighting did not hinder the festivities, nor the jousts, tourneys and nuptials which the Emperor had planned for his people, nor did the festivities hinder the fighting, but due provision was made for each. The Emperor had only recently been crowned, and a great concourse of people was in attendance, ambassadors from kings and princes, and from the Italian republics. The Bishop of Burgos was there by order of our King and Master, Don Juan, to whom the Emperor showed the greatest respect. And, indeed, he deserved it, for apart from the Sovereign whom he represented, he was a noble and discreet man, and learned, and kept great and worthy state. Representatives were also there from the Duke of Burgundy, the Duke of Milan, from Venice, Florence, and Genoa, from Pope Eugenius, and from the King of Aragon. Many brought presents, especially the Venetians and Florentines, those from Venice being specially noteworthy. The Emperor received them all very graciously, but those from Venice he would not accept, saying

that it was not fitting for him to take presents from a people upon whom he intended to make war. He said further, in the presence of all, that he had made a solemn vow not to accept the Imperial crown, nor even to enjoy its revenues, until that which the Venetians had filched was restored to the Empire.[2] Then having re-taken the Holy Sepulchre, he would be crowned there. All who heard this vow were very glad, except the Venetians who straightway departed.

This day I made my reverence to the Emperor, being well attended by Castilians and Germans, also by two noblemen whom I had met at Jerusalem, and by that knight of Patendorf with whom I had travelled. The Emperor received me very graciously, and did me much honour. He had celebrated that day a marriage between a widowed countess and a knight of the court, and the Emperor jousted with the Margrave of Brandenburg, and the Emperor was unhorsed in one of the encounters, but he got up very merrily, and laying aside his helmet, he placed on his head a hat adorned with a very costly brooch. He then approached the bride, and presented hat and brooch to her, and taking her by the hand he led her to the palace, accompanied by many noblemen and great lords. It was Vespers when the company went to table. The ladies sat apart, but the bridegroom sat with the gentlemen. At the Emperor's table he, and the knight of Prussia, and I sat alone, and the banquet lasted until an hour after midnight, and then followed the dancing which went on until dawn.

The Emperor was a man of light-hearted disposition, very graceful in person and face, although of unusual stature. He was somewhat dark in colour, so that the Germans said in jest that he was of Castilian blood. He took me by the hand and bade me look upon the ladies, and choose the one it would please me best to dance with, and on two or three occasions he even

carried a light before me. Thus we passed that night, and I saw there many noblemen with the device of the Escama which I received from the King my Master. These gentlemen accompanied me to my inn when I took leave of the Emperor. The next day after Mass the Emperor summoned all the ambassadors, and sitting on his raised throne, he called to him the Bishop of Burgos, and asked him to make reply for him to the ambassadors, and this he did in order to honour the Bishop. After this I drew near to him, and he gave me his device, as well as the Order of the Dragon, which is in Hungary what the Order of the Eagle is in Austria, and the Order of the Tusino in Bohemia.

Each day the Emperor provided feasts, but, as I have remarked, he did not neglect the war for which he was always prepared. The chief cause of this war was the Empress,[3] widow of Sigismund, and mother-in-law of the present Emperor Albert, who, as they say, was a very loose woman, and when her son-in-law took steps against her, she left his country and fled to the King of Poland, taking with her much treasure which she gave to the King. She bestowed upon him all rights over her German lands, and then she married him. But this was the greatest absurdity, for she was more than sixty-five years of age and he not yet twelve. On the strength of this quarrel the Poles entered Germany, but the Bishop of Burgos who was there, a discreet man, dealt with the matter in such wise that the parties were appeased and peace was made, which was a very difficult business in view of the damage which had been done. On account of this I had an opportunity of seeing the King of Poland.[4] I found him in a village, a day's journey away, with a great company of lords who were very wonderfully clad and armed according to the custom of their country, and very well mounted. They say that the King is a great lord, both in lands and revenue. He was of the age

before mentioned, of a pleasant face, and very valiant. I wished also to see the city of Cracow, which is the chief city of his Kingdom, but it was not possible. Nor was I able to witness a tiger (bear ?) hunt, which is the most remarkable thing to be seen in these parts. The beasts are very wild and fierce, and very fleet-footed, and it is a great sport which cannot be undertaken without many men and dogs, and the flesh is good to eat.

I took leave of the King of Poland and returned to the Emperor at Breslau. Speaking one day about my experiences, he asked me how I had fared in Germany, and I had to tell him that Duke Stephen had imprisoned me in the Rhineland, whereat he was much incensed, and said that the Castilians did not deserve such treatment, since he knew well how many favours the Germans had received from the King of Spain and his people. He told me, further, that before he was married he had proposed to visit Spain. The next day, as I was at dinner with the Bishop of Burgos, the Emperor's Hungarian herald entered, whom I had already encountered with the admiral Don Fadrique, and who was known as Tusol. He brought a silver-gilt cup in which were some 300 florins, which the Emperor sent, saying that I must pardon him that he could not show me greater liberality, but that the time and place were not favourable. I returned answer that I thanked him greatly for what he sent me, but that I must return the money, as I had sufficient for my needs, and it would be a burden to me to take it. I said also that if I had been without money, I would not only have accepted it, but, indeed, I should have asked for it, knowing well his great generosity, and with this the herald left me. The Bishop of Burgos was greatly pleased with my answer, and related the affair afterwards to King Juan in my presence.

It is seldom that a day passes at this court without

a contest, the parties having sharpened lances and steel helmets and shields, but they are all so used to the practice and so skilful that there is no more danger than in a contest with jousting lances. The city of Breslau is very large, greater than Seville, and very populous. It belongs to the Bishop of Silesia, who is the greatest prelate in those parts. Besides his great revenues, the number of men he can place in the field of battle is most remarkable. The country is as cold in comparison with Lower Germany, as Germany is in comparison with Castile. The chimneys and stoves do not give sufficient warmth; but there is another kind of stove for heating which they use. They make a fire beneath an upstairs room, and in the floor are covered holes, and they place seats above, also with holes in them. The people then sit down on those seats and unstop the holes, and the heat rises between the legs to each one.

So cold is the city that the Emperor and his courtiers go about the streets seated in wooden vehicles like threshing machines. These are drawn by horses shod with iron in the manner of the country, and so they are dragged through the streets. Others go in carriages drawn by eight or ten horses. These carriages are entirely closed with awnings, and they fix braziers to them. Thus they go from their houses to the palace or wherever they wish. No one with any money rides on horseback for fear of falling, for the streets are like glass owing to the continual frosts, and many go on foot. Everyone attends church at midnight, even the children, and the people are very devoted to the Mass. They fortify themselves by taking great quantities of food and drink, a custom which to us seems stranger than anything else. I believe that more money is expended here upon furs and spices than in half the world besides. The people are very wealthy, having much silver, and as they do not keep many servants

and have large revenues and great wealth, they live very well. The Emperor Albert was a man of sovereign virtue, a good Christian and devout, as well in the hearing of divine offices, as in the acts of piety which he did. He was honest in his bearing and very continent, an open and vigorous knight. It was due to him alone, when he was Duke, that the Bohemians did not penetrate into Germany, for the Emperor Sigismund made little resistance, being a Bohemian by birth, for which reason he did not march against them.

CHAPTER XXVII

Departure from Breslau.—Journey to Vienna.—Tafur is attacked by the way.—Vienna.—The Empress Elizabeth.—Buda.—Neustadt.—Duke Frederick of Austria.—The Carnic Alps.—Friuli.—Treviso.—Padua.

I NOW asked the Emperor if it would please him to give me licence to depart, as I desired to return to Castile since the King, my Master, was taking part in person in the Moorish war, and those who were there requested him to commit me to the care of two of his knights, who were travelling with an escort of 200 horsemen to Vienna. We accordingly departed from Breslau and came with much labour and danger to the Bohemian frontier. We now entered the Margravate of Moravia which belonged to the Emperor Albert, the Emperor Sigismund, his father-in-law, having bestowed it upon him at the time of his marriage, and we found many places wasted and burnt, which the Bohemians had destroyed. Thus we passed twelve days until we arrived at Vienna, suffering much from ice and frost, and in our route we passed over two rivers which we crossed with our carts on the ice. It was so cold that my teeth almost fell out of my mouth. Without doubt, it is a terrible business to travel through such country in winter. Of the two knights, my companions, one lived in a place belonging to the present Emperor, and the other resided in Vienna, having a house in commission from the Emperor Albert some two leagues outside the city, where he lived with his wife, and when we were two leagues from the city they departed, each one to his place. That one who lived in Vienna asked me to spend some five or six days with him in his house, saying

that he would fetch me from the city. He then showed me the way to Vienna and told me where to lodge, and we parted.

I had not gone half a league from there when I was attacked in the way by some unmounted noblemen with intent to rob, but they did not succeed in their plan, as I and my people had good horses. So we escaped and arrived at Vienna, and put up at the inn which had been recommended, but no sooner had I sat down to eat than those very noblemen appeared who had attacked me, and I recognized one of them immediately. I asked them how they could behave thus, and they told me that they were poor noblemen, and had to rob for a living. I replied that I also was noble and poor, and moreover a stranger in their midst, and that my needs were equally great. Then they craved pardon and offered to go and seek for money so that they could give me entertainment. But I thanked them and made them sit down with me, and gave them money with which they were greatly pleased, and they accompanied me on most of the days that I was in the city.

Vienna[1] is situated on the river Danube and is very large, about the same size as Cordova. The houses, both inside and outside, are very beautiful. The streets are pleasant, as are also the churches and inns. The great church is most notable, particularly the tower which was copied from that at Strassburg. The organs are so large that when they are played the church seems as if it would fall. In this city there are many workpeople of all kinds, and a university for the study of sciences. The Emperor has a very notable palace. The Empress[2] was there, and I visited her, as the Emperor had commanded me to do. She is the daughter of the Emperor Sigismund, a most beautiful lady, and tall. She has a little son, who is now King of Hungary, and two daughters of between eleven and

fifteen years of age. I gave her the news of the Emperor, her husband, and told her that peace was concluded between him and the King of Poland, and that the Emperor was preparing to return, at which she was much pleased. She sent for certain of her gentlemen and ordered them to treat me well, and to show me the city and bear me company, which they did. I then took my leave, and although the Emperor had invested me with the Order of the Dragon, she gave me the one she was wearing, since it was, she said, her father's Order, and only she had authority to bestow it.

I remained with these gentlemen and was four days in the city, entertaining myself with them until the knight, who was my travelling companion, sent two squires to me, and I departed and left the palace and betook myself to the place where he awaited me. His house is called Lacsensdorf, and he received me there. But before leaving Vienna I went to see Jorge Voniroc, who had made a vow of arms with Don Fernando de Guivara, and this knight accompanied me those two leagues to the house, where my host made him dine with us before he departed, and that day we had great entertainment. The knight then returned to Vienna and I remained with my host four days, refreshing myself pleasantly after my exertions. I was received there as a familiar, and by the lady of the house as if she had been my own mother. I saw the whole estate, which is among the largest and most splendid I have seen. It is very strong, with rampart and moat, although situated in a plain, and on one side is a great park about a league in extent, where there are wild pigs, deer and other game. A river runs through it and the thickets rise on either side. In this palace the Emperor keeps armourers, and swords and bows and arrows, suits of mail, and many other things wonderful to behold. The knight and his lady gave me presents, she linen, and he a sword, spurs and gilded stirrups, and

so I took my leave of them. I asked that knight to send one of his squires with me to Buda, a city of Hungary, three days' journey from there. I departed with this squire, and travelling along the Danube, we entered Hungary, which is very extensive and well populated, with great strongholds on the German frontier.

We arrived at Buda, a city as great as Valladolid, and the Danube flows by it. It is the greatest city in Hungary and has many workpeople, but it is not so cleanly as the German cities. The inhabitants are somewhat gross, which comes, they say, from their plenty. The Emperor Sigismund improved the city greatly and erected a noble palace there, in which he built a great audience chamber, made like that at Padua, but to me it did not appear to be so magnificent. I departed from there and came to the confines of Hungary, and entered Germany, and came to a city called Neustadt, which signifies New Town, and there I found the present Emperor Frederick, then Duke of Austria,[3] a first cousin of the Emperor Albert, but not so noble a man. He was in the midst of the celebrations attending the marriage of his daughter with that Margrave of Meissen before mentioned, who had defeated the Bohemians. I remained with the Duke, who now is Emperor, a whole week, and there I met again my second travelling companion, who showed me great courtesy, as did also the Duke, with whom I dined daily. A great multitude of people had assembled from Germany for the wedding, not only from among his own household, for he is a great lord, but also his kinsmen and friends. The bride was a gentle lady, and there was much entertainment, but the bridegroom was absent in his country by reason of the war, and they took the bride to him. This Duke, now Emperor, is exceedingly wealthy, but they say that he knows well how to keep what he has. He had returned

from Jerusalem a few days before I set out, and he took great pleasure in conversing with me of lands beyond the sea, and I enjoyed myself there with him. I then took leave of the Duke and dismissed the squire who had escorted me to Hungary, and sent him to his master, a day's journey from that place.

I departed from Neustadt, going by lands and cities, towns, and castles of that Duke, who has great possessions, until I arrived at the Alps, which I crossed with great labour and peril on account of the severe frosts, but the passes are all so well populated, and provisions are so plentiful that it is a marvel to behold. All this country has been taken by the Venetians from the Empire,[4] and in those passes and narrow ways they have built towers and gates with which they close them; all which is to further their tyranny. I descended towards Italy, and came to a country which they call Friuli, which belongs by right to the Patriarch of Aquileia, where he had many and great possessions, but the Venetians have taken everything. I saw the Patriarch at the court of the Emperor, where he made complaint about the matter. They say, without doubt, that if the Emperor had not died, the Venetians would have compassed his death with poison, having been apprised of the oath which he swore, that they should be dispossessed of what they had taken by violence. I went now to Treviso, another city which the Venetians had seized. It is a great city and wealthy, situated near the sea about a day's journey from Venice.

I desired to go on at once to Venice, but hearing that the Pope proposed to leave Ferrara for Florence, I hurried on in order to arrive first, and came to Padua. This city is about as big as Seville and very rich and a great trading centre. It is close to the sea, about half a day's journey from Venice. This also the Venetians took from the lord of Carrara, which was his patrimony, and he, too, was with the Emperor com-

plaining of the Venetians. I learnt that the Pope would not leave for five or six days, and I remained at Padua three days, and, indeed, there is much to see there. It possesses a very remarkable university, among the best in the Christian world, also a magnificent and very wealthy monastery where lie the bodies of St. Anthony of Padua and St. Luke the Evangelist, which is a notable place of pilgrimage and devotion. In the centre of the city there is a great hall[5] which is twice as big as any I have seen. The roof is covered with lead and the interior with Milanese metal work; the ceiling is blue, finely painted at intervals with golden stars. In the centre there are bars of iron like beams, adorned with great gilt apples, and it is all painted with the history of the world from the Creation to the Advent. They say that the painting cost more than 40,000 ducats. Round the hall are seats of wood, and there they administer justice, and outside there are porticoes. The hall has four doors, on each of which are sculptured marbles. Two of them commemorate men of science of that city, namely Titus Livius, the historian, and Magister Pedro d' Abano,[6] a great necromancer, who was burnt there by the Friars Minor for doing strange and wonderful things, such as drawing straightway to the harbour of Venice the ships of Constantinople, and other matters falling within the province of witchcraft. Beneath this hall they have erected shops for those that make clothes and shoes. From these it is possible to see how great the hall is, for although the city is very extensive, all these tradespeople are housed there. The city has some very ancient buildings. They say it was built by Antenor after the destruction of Troy, and, indeed, its buildings are of great antiquity. On the day of my arrival justice was executed upon a native of Padua, who had murdered a knight of Catalonia, named Mosen Villafranca, who was his guest.

CHAPTER XXVIII

Ferrara.—The Pope leaves for Florence.—Venice.—A great engineering feat.—Vicenza.—Verona.—Florence.—The Pope and the Emperor.—Pisa.—Bologna.—Venice.

I LEFT Padua and travelled along the canals, and since that country is very close to Venice, they collect the water into lakes, some of fresh and some of salt water, but these lakes have a very evil smell, and they call them the marshes, and when in speaking the Italians wish to refer to anything as noxious or stinking, they liken it to those marshes. On drawing near to Ferrara, they told me that the Pope was wishful to depart, and it was so, and on arrival I found the Pope preparing to set out for Florence. As soon as I arrived I waited on the Emperor of the Greeks, who rejoiced greatly to see me again, and I saw also the Pope's progress which was in this wise.[1] All the archbishops, bishops, and other prelates and clergy, went on foot in procession with the crosses. Then followed the cardinals on horseback, staffs in hand, in order of precedence, and after them came twelve horses with crimson trappings, one bearing the umbrella, one the chair and another the cushion, and so on until the end. The last horse was covered with brocade, and on a rich silver saddle was a casket containing the Blessed Sacrament. This horse had a silver bell, and two prelates led it by the reins. Then came the Pope himself, upon a horse with crimson trappings. He was vested as for Mass, wearing a bishop's mitre and giving his blessing on one side and the other, while men cast coins into the street, so that those who picked them up might gain pardons. This was done to prevent the crowds from pressing upon the Pope, whose horse was led by the Marquis of Ferrara and the Count of Urbino.

It was rumoured that the Duke of Milan was lying in wait to capture the Pope, so that the Marquis escorted him that day to a hermitage a mile from there with a great company of armed men, making it seem that the Pope was travelling with troops to one of his cities, where he had arranged great festivities. But in fact he rode with him in a different direction, and in two days brought him safely to Florence. They say that for this service, and others that the Marquis did, the Pope reduced the tribute payable by the Marquisate to 3,000 ducats, and confirmed all its privileges, as appears in the Bull which the Marquis had engraved in stone and set up in the great church at Ferrara.

I remained two days in Ferrara and desired to depart, and I could not do otherwise than go to Florence, for all the banks were closed and the bankers had gone away. The Emperor desired to take me with him, but I departed, and leaving my horses at Ferrara to bait, I went to Venice to see after my goods and rest, while my horses refreshed themselves at Ferrara. The Emperor left the next day, and I remained at Venice, and was as well placed as if I had been in my own house, and I was very grateful to my friend, the merchant, whom I had entrusted with my property, for, indeed, I could not have left it in better hands. He was preparing to depart for Seville, and I asked him if he would ship my goods for me, except the money which I retained, and he did me this good office as willingly as the first. I remained there with him at Venice until he departed. At this time, while the Pope was holding his court at Brescia, news came that the Duke of Milan had closely invested that city by boats from the lake, in such manner that no provisions could be got in, whereupon the Venetians equipped a galley, and by a cunning contrivance carried it overland and across a mountain, as high as any in Castile, and then brought it down and launched it in the lake,[2] and I think that

100,000 people came to see the feat, and not without reason, for I never saw anything so skilful, however difficult it may be to believe it. When the galley was launched it soon destroyed all the other boats, and no others dared to come, and it succoured the city, and the siege was raised, although the Milanese prided themselves they had already taken it. I went to see the Duke of Milan's men who were there, with Nicolao Picherino[3], their chief captain, and a very fine army it was.

I now departed and came to Vicenza, a pleasant city of the Venetians; thence I reached Verona, likewise a Venetian city. It is large and rich though thinly populated, and very ancient. They report that it was built by Roman exiles, who named it Veroma, which is to say: "Lo! another Rome," and indeed many Roman remains may be seen there to prove the resemblance. I then returned to Venice and remained there two days, after which I left for Florence, where I found the Pope and the Emperor, and I collected my money. I remained there eight days marvelling at the city, which is one of the most wonderful in Christendom, wonderful alike in size, as in wealth and government. It is ruled by individuals who are elected each month by lot, and the lot may fall on shoemaker or nobleman alike, but nevertheless the government could not be bettered. Florence is full of delightful houses, excellent streets and inns, and it is very cleanly and well ordered, with magnificent churches and monasteries. Its hospitals are unequalled in the world. There is one for men and one for women, so clean and well ordered and provisioned that if it happens that a king or prince falls sick, he straightway leaves his house and goes there in order to be nursed. Moreover, there are pardons for those who live in them, and plenary indulgence for those who die there. Who can measure the good work which is

done in these hospitals? Each sick person is lodged according to his station, but the treatment is the same for all. In what will so wise a people not do well? Indeed, Florence has ever produced great and valiant men in science, and it is so to this day.

The great church of this city is very notable. There are also wonderful buildings, particularly the tower at the door of the church, which is adorned almost to the top with marble statues. There is a great square in front, and in the centre is a very great church worked with mosaics within, and covered with lead without. They call it the church of St. John the Baptist. In it is a great baptismal font, as well as an altar where they say Mass, and high up are suspended the banners of all the cities which belong to Florence and are governed by her; for by good government she has gained much territory, and even the city of Pisa, to which Florence was once subject, but now her lords hold it in their hands.

This city of Pisa, they say, owned at one time the islands of Sicily, Sardinia, and Corsica, with vast provinces on the mainland. But once a ship passed which carried a cardinal and certain prelates, ambassadors from the Pope to the King of France, without giving the accustomed salute.[4] Thereupon the Pisans flew to arms, and captured and burnt the ship, and the Pope, when he heard of it, was so incensed that he ordered war to be declared and proclaimed a crusade against them, and did them great damage. But on the entreaty of certain kings and princes, the Pope made an end of his wrath, on condition that the culprits should be absolved if they set out and captured the Holy City. Then the Pisans prepared a great fleet and passed over the seas, and took Jerusalem with its dependencies, and remained there some time, but finally they found it was too costly to retain the city and they sold it, from which act all their evils are believed to

have come. It is to be doubted if there is now a single natural-born Pisan in the city. They had also to pull down their buildings, and, further, as a mark of dishonour, to wear their helmets reversed. Thus they are disdained by all men and are subjugated to those who were their servants.

It is said that when they captured Jerusalem, the Venetians and Genoese were also there, and after the city was taken they divided the treasure which they found into three parts. In one they placed the Holy Grail, which is made of a single emerald, in the second they placed two columns, in which each one can foresee the evils which are to befall him and whatever he desires, and in the third they placed the treasure. They then threw lots, and the Holy Grail fell to Genoa, where it now is, as I myself have seen,[5] the columns, with the city of Jerusalem, came to the Pisans, which columns they brought to Pisa, and Venice took the treasure which is the foundation of all its wealth, but the columns which were brought to Pisa lost their virtue when Jerusalem was sold.

There is a very notable church and a cloister, the soil of which is from the holy field at Jerusalem, which was purchased with the thirty pieces of silver. It is called here in Pisa the Campo Santo. They say that bodies interred here do not endure more than thirty days, as the earth consumes them. Without doubt, Pisa was formerly a great place. Its harbour is a river which reaches to the city, and the galleys enter and go out there. But Leghorn, which is close at hand, is the principal harbour for galleys and ships.

I departed from Florence, and came to a town which they call Firenzuola. It is in the mountains of Pistoia, and it was there that Hannibal won the battle of Cannae. Close to Firenzuola, surrounded by a river, is a field, all burnt,[6] and if they throw wood in, it is consumed at once, but no fire appears nor anything that burns,

which is a great marvel. I climbed those mountains, which are very rugged although well populated, and came to the great and famous city of Bologna. From there I travelled to Ferrara, and took my horses which I had left there at bait, and they had grown very fat, and I sold them and returned to Venice. Here I stayed a month waiting for a ship, and finally I found one which was bound for Sicily, and I collected all that I had and went on board.

CHAPTER XXIX

The homeward journey.—Ravenna.—Brindisi.—The Straits of Messina.—The Sirens.—Lipari Islands.—Palermo.—Syracuse.—Mount Etna.—Tunis.—Sardinia.

Departing from Venice we coasted along Italy to a city called Ravenna, a very ancient place, and from there we came to Rimini which belongs to the Count of Urbino da Malatesta. We then went to Pesaro and Fano, two fine cities, and arrived at last at Ancona, which is of the patrimony of the Church. We sailed thence for the port of Brindisi, which is as fine, or finer, than any I have seen. It is in the territory of Apulia, which they call Tierra di Lavoro. The next day we departed, and after doubling the Cape of Spartivento, and sailing to the right, as we had a favourable wind, we came that evening to the island of Sicily, and we lay out at sea until the following day. We then came with good weather through the Straits, leaving Calabria, which is in the Kingdom of Naples, on the right, and Sicily on the left, and after much labour, by reason of the strong currents thereabouts, we anchored at the city of Messina. These Straits, according to the poets, were the home of the Sirens. They say that Naples and the island of Sicily were at one time joined together and formed one country, and that an earthquake broke off this island. Here the sea is deeper than anywhere else.

They say, also, that there is a species of fish in these parts, formed like a woman from the waist upwards, and below like fish, and these creatures live in the depths where the first movements of the wind can be noticed, and when they feel the motion, if it is very strong, they know that a great storm is brewing, and

they show themselves on the face of the waters, singing a song. They say that to hear it is certain death. It is a sad song, lamenting the fate of those to whom they appear. Death comes to all who hear it, because they sing only when the storm rages mightily and none can escape, except by a miracle. The port of Messina has very deep water, so that a great ship can ride at anchor with its bowsprit on land. It is closed by a spit of land which looks like an artificial mole. At one end is a monastery of Greek monks,[1] and at the other end is the dockyard. The city has many large buildings and is very ancient, and the poets, orators and historians of old wrote much concerning it, especially in the First Punic War. It is sufficiently well walled and there are beautiful gardens within and without, and it is well watered. Although it is now somewhat sparsely inhabited, one can see that it was once a great city. Over against it, towards Calabria, there is a place called Reggio, and the Straits are so wide that on a clear day it is only just possible to see a man riding on horseback on the beach on the other side.

I left Messina and came to Patti, a small town in the same island, and there in front is the island of Vulcano, which, they say, is one of the three mouths of Hell, because it throws up smoke continually, with noise of thunder, and large quantities of scoria, which latter are so light that they float on the water. Close by is another opening which they call Stromboli, as furious as the other. Adjoining is an island which they call Lipari. It is a small place, and by reason of the smoke from Stromboli, those that live there suffer much from their eyes. It is the chief seat of a bishopric. I saw there, as I was trying to land, the biggest fish I have ever beheld. It was as large as a very great tower. We rode there that day as our ship could make no headway on account of the great calm. A large Moorish galley with two small ones was cruising about

and drew near us, but did not venture to attack us; so we passed that day until Vespers, when a fresh wind sprang up and filled the sails, and we sailed all that night, and the next day at dawn we drew near to Monte Pelegrino, which is above the harbour of Palermo. We anchored in the harbour and came on shore, as the captain had business there, and we remained for six days.

Palermo is as large as Seville, and since the King of Aragon made war on Naples, the city has been much enlarged, and there are now more inhabitants. It is the chief place of traffic in the island. It is the seat of an archbishopric. The cathedral is about two miles distant from the town, and in it they crown and bury the kings of those parts. It is a magnificent church, most richly adorned, and it has the finest mosaics of any I have seen in Latin countries. It is called Monreale.[2] The city of Palermo is very wealthy on account of its trade. It is well provided with all things, and in addition to being in a great country, it is one of the largest cities there. It is remarkable for its sugar canes. Monte Pellegrino is a very high mountain, with much water and large pastures. They say that if any beast is likely to die, as soon as they take it to that mountain, in eight days it is well. This city sends large supplies to the King of Aragon at Naples, provisions as well as horses, and they build ships for him called *tafareas*, which carry sixty horses or more.

I departed from Palermo and went to Trapani, which is at the end of the island, a very good harbour. There is a tower there which they call Columbaria, and close by it they fish for coral.[3] It is a pleasant place and well built. Above it is a high mountain which they call Monte Trapani, where lies the body of Anchises, father of Aeneas. We departed and sailed round the island towards the east, and came to Girgenti. Thence we sailed to Syracuse, a pleasant city, belonging

to the Queen of Aragon, sister of King Juan, our Master. We next came to Catania which is on the slopes of Mount Etna, the third mouth of Hell. Here we took in cargo, and three days later we sailed for Sardinia, but as we drew out to sea an east wind from Greece arose and carried us towards Tunis. After sailing a day and a night, the next day at three o'clock we came to Cape Blanco, the port of Tunis. I desired much to go on shore to see the town, but the captain would not suffer it, as he intended leaving at once. The harbour of Tunis is very shallow so that ships cannot enter it, and they unload their cargoes into light boats. We remained there one day, and then sailed for two days and nights, and came to the island of Sardinia, which belongs to the King of Aragon, and entered the port of Cagliari, which is a fine place. We discharged our merchandise and remained there two days. This island is very unhealthy, having bad air and bad water. . . . (Here the narrative breaks off.)

FRANCE
SPAIN
AFRICA
Gulf of Lyons
BALEARIC ISLANDS
MINORCA
MAJORCA
IVICA
SARDINIA
Mediterranean
Nymwegen
Cleves
Bois le Duc
Antwerp
Malines
Louvain
Brussels
Ghent
Arras
Cologne
Coblenz
Main
Strasburg
Ulm
Schaffhausen
CONSTANCE
Basle
LUCERNE
St Gothard Pass
Milan
Brescia
Piacenza
Parma
Ferrara
Bologna
Genoa
Nice
Leghorn
Florence
Perugia
Spoleto
Barcelona
San Lucar
Cadiz
Malaga
Gibraltar
Ceuta
Cartagena
Cagliari
Trapani
Tunis
MAP
Illustrating
Tafur's Travels
1435 · 1439.

Vienna
Buda Pesth
U S T R I A
R. DON
Kaffa
Black Sea
Sinope
Trebizond
Ragusa
Adrianople
Constantinople
S. of Marmora
Brusa
Valona
Troy
Tenedos
Salonica
Mitylene
ASIA MINOR
Corfu
GREECE
Chios
Modon
Coron
Rhodes
Castelrosso
Nicosia
CYPRUS
CRETE (Candia)
Beyrout
Jaffa
Jericho
Jerusalem
Bethlehem
DEAD SEA
Rosetta
Damietta
Alexandria
Cairo
Mt SINAI
Red S.

[face p. 234

NOTES

CHAPTER I

[1] Don Enrique, Count of Niebla, a famous soldier of his time. His abortive attack on Gibraltar must have taken place at the end of 1435, as Tafur's arrival at Genoa can be dated quite definitely (see ch. ii, note 6). Several Spanish chroniclers give the date of Niebla's death as 1436, but that the attack on Gibraltar took place before the rising in Genoa is clear from Tafur's narrative. The news of the revolt at Genoa reached King Juan early in January 1436 (*Crónica de Don Juan II*, ch. i). The news of the Count of Niebla's death reached him later (*Crónica*, ch. iii). I cannot explain the discrepancy, but it is unlikely that Tafur can be wrong as to these happenings, since he took part in the one and was an eye-witness of the other.

[2] The King, about whom we hear so much in Tafur's narrative, was Juan II of Castille (1406–1454). His daughter, Isabella the Catholic, married Ferdinand of Aragon.

[3] Christmas Eve, 1435.

CHAPTER II

[1] This church cannot be identified.

[2] The Doge was either Tommaso Fregoso or Isnardo Guarchi.

[3] The legend concerning the founding of Genoa is carved on the nave arches of San Lorenzo, where it has remained since 1307. See Carden, *Genoa*, London, 1908, p. 1.

[4] The Sacro Catino is still preserved. It was taken as part of the spoils of Caesarea in 1101. It is in fact made of glass. It was sent to Paris and reclaimed in 1815, but being carelessly packed it broke on the way. The fragments have been united by a setting of gold filigree.

[5] In 1373, as a result of the murder of some Genoese merchants, a fleet was sent to Cyprus and the King (Peter II) was brought back as a prisoner with his uncle. The island was heavily fined and Famagusta was made over to Genoa to secure the King's ranson. The son born at Genoa was the child of the uncle. He became Janus II and died in 1432. His son Janus III was the King when Tafur visited Cyprus. See below, pp. 64 *ff.* and pp. 103 *ff.* Also Stubbs, *Lectures on Medieval and Modern History*, pp. 225-228.

[6] The commercial activity of Genoa during the Middle Ages was

much hindered by internal dissensions. The city was forced to accept foreign dominion, successively German, Neapolitan and Milanese. The troubles which Tafur witnessed arose out of the defeat and capture of Alfonso of Aragon by the Genoese at a sea-fight off Ponza in August 1435. Alfonso had claimed the Kingdom of Naples on the death of Joanna II, and Genoa had been dragged into the quarrel. Having captured the King of Aragon, the Genoese were furious to find that the prisoner was to be taken to Milan, where the Duke received him as a friend and ally. The rising took place at the end of Dec. 1435. The governor, Oppizino d'Alzate, was slain, and the Milanese were driven out. Carden, *Genoa*, pp. 39-41.

[7] Francesco Sforza (1401-1466) was in the midst of one of his bewildering wars. Having fought for Milan against Venice, he was now fighting for the Pope, Venice and Florence against Milan.

[8] Niccolo Piccinino (1386–1444), one of the most notorious of the Italian condottieri.

[9] On Florence, see below, p. 227.

[10] As a result of his disputes with the Council of Basle, and threatened by the Visconti and by a republican rising, Pope Eugenius IV fled from Rome to Florence in June 1434. He lived for more than 8 years as an exile. Gregorovius, *Rome in the Middle Ages* (Eng. translation), VII, i, p. 45.

[11] On Ferrara and the Marquis see below, pp. 176 *ff.*

[12] Venice is described in detail below, pp. 156 *ff.*

[13] "Lo Storione" was one of the popular inns on the Rialto. The sign appears in a picture by Carpaccio "Il Patriarca di Grado." See E. Zaniboni, *Alberghi Italiani* (sec. xiii-xviii), Naples, 1921, p. 65.

CHAPTER III

[1] On Rome in 1436 see Gregorovius, *Rome in the Middle Ages* (Eng. translation), VII, i, p. 89. With Tafur's remarks on the wild beasts compare Gregorovius, VI, ii, p. 618, where it is stated that in 1411 five large wolves were killed in the Vatican Gardens.

[2] On Constantine's Basilica see Marucchi, *Basiliques et Eglises de Rome*, 2nd. ed. 1909, pp. 110 *ff.* with plans and drawings. The foundations of the existing church were laid in 1506.

[3] The obelisk was placed where it now stands by Sixtus V in 1586. A careless reading of the inscription may have led to its being taken for a memorial to Caesar. Higden tells us that it was a saying among pilgrims that anyone creeping under the obelisk was cleansed from sin. F. M. Nichols, *The Marvels of Rome*, London, 1899, pp. 71-73 and notes.

[4] I cannot explain this unless it is a confused reference to the Porta Santa which is only opened in Jubilee years.

[5] The picture is still in the chapel. The reason given for the exclusion of women is certainly startling. Usually the prohibition is connected with the death of John the Baptist.

[6] This must refer to the famous equestrian statue of Marcus Aurelius which then stood in front of the Lateran church. See E. Rodocanachi, *The Roman Capitol* (Eng. translation), pp. 131 *ff.*

[7] On the various legends connected with this colossus see F. M. Nichols, *The Marvels of Rome*, 1889, pp. 62, 102; also G. Mc N. Rushforth in *Journal of Roman Studies*, 1919, p. 14.

[8] On the legend of Augustus and the prophecy of the birth of Christ see F. M. Nichols, *op. cit.*, pp. 35, 90.

[9] The Pantheon.

[10] S. Silvestro in Capite.

[11] The Arch of Severus probably gained the name here given to it from a careless reading of the inscription. Nichols, *op. cit.*, p. 11.

[12] The place called Ad Aquas Silvas, now the Tre Fontane. The existing church of S. Paolo alle Tre Fontane dates from 1560. Tafur refers to the church of S. Anastasio alle Tre Fontane given in 1190 to St. Bernard who founded there a convent of Cistercian monks.

[13] A reference to the statues of Marforio and his friend and gossip Pasquino who carried on the famous dialogues, merciless to the government and the times. These dialogues were placarded at early morning on their respective pedestals.

CHAPTER IV

[1] Braccio da Montane (1368–1424), a notorious condottiere, the companion and opponent of Sforza.

[2] The Count was Guid' Antonio da Montefeltro, son of Antonio, Count of Urbino and Montefeltro, whom he succeeded in 1404. His piety was remarkable, and it is possible that on his death in 1442 steps were taken, as Tafur suggests, to canonize him, but nothing came of it. See Dennistoun, *Memoirs of the Dukes of Urbino*, 1851, I, pp. 38 *ff.* It is difficult to understand the reason for the subterfuge adopted by Tafur here.

[3] On Venice see below, pp. 156 *ff.* The pilgrim traffic was very carefully controlled at this time. A number of contracts between pilgrims and galley-masters have been preserved. On the whole subject see M. M. Newett, *Canon Pietro Casola's Pilgrimage to Jerusalem* (1494), Manchester, 1907, Introd. and R. Röhricht, *Deutsche Pilgerreisen nach dem heiligen Lande*, Innsbruck, 1900. Full details concerning the preparations, the setting out and the whole pilgrimage from beginning to end are contained in *The Book of the Wanderings of Brother Felix Fabri* (1480–1483), translated by Aubrey Stewart, 1892, 2 vols. (Pilgrims' Text Society). There is an interesting description

of a galley and of the life on board, at Vol. I, pp. 125 *ff.* Fabri's account is pleasantly summarized by P. S. Allen, in *The Age of Erasmus*, Oxford 1914, pp. 238 *ff.*

CHAPTER V

[1] Ladislaus, King of Naples (1386–1414), a soldier of great courage and ability. It was Zara which he sold to the Venetians for 100,000 florins in 1409. Corfu, with the rest of the Ionian Islands, was acquired by Venice in 1205 as part of their share of the spoils of the Greek Empire, but Venetian control was not definitely established until 1368.

[2] Fabri (I, p. 184) also describes the island and monastery.

[3] There is a long description of Modone in M. M. Newett, *Canon Pietro Casola's Pilgrimage* (1494), Manchester, 1907, pp. 191 *ff.* In 1204 the Morea fell to Venice on the division of the Byzantine Empire. Modone and Corone were the chief strongholds. In 1500 they were taken by the Turks.

[4] Probably the isolated rock of Monemvasia from which our ancestors obtained their malmsey wine. See W. Miller, *Essays on the Latin Orient*, Cambridge, pp. 231 *ff.*

[5] Crete also passed to Venice in 1204, but the new dominion was not readily accepted and there were many revolts. Tafur must be referring to the rising of 1362; as to which see W. Miller, *Essays on the Latin Orient*, Cambridge, 1921, pp. 183 *ff.* When the Venetians were again masters the whole plateau of Lasithi, one of the most fertile districts in Crete, was converted into a desert, and nothing was suffered to be sown there for nearly a century.

[6] The Knights Hospitallers, or Knights of St. John, conquered Rhodes in 1309 and were given the estates of the Knights Templars in 1312. They were driven out in 1522. Tafur returns to Rhodes later and describes the election of the Grand Master (p. 108). The Collachium, a term said to be derived from the Latin *colligere*, was the part of the town in which the principal buildings of the Order were collected and where the Knights had to reside. See De Balabre, *Rhodes of the Knights*, Oxford, 1908, p. 96 (plan at p. 22).

CHAPTER VI

[1] The pilgrim ships had to lie at Jaffa often for days awaiting the arrival of the Governor of Jerusalem and the Prior of Mount Sion. The Prior's business was to see that the pilgrims were accompanied to Jerusalem and to make what arrangements he could for their comfort. The Turkish officials took down the names of the pilgrims and of their parents, and full particulars as to their position, and then issued passes, after which the pilgrims were thrust into a row of caves on the sea-

shore, known as St. Peter's Caves, where the filth was indescribable. Röhricht, *Deutsche Pilgerreisen*, p. 17. Here they remained while the question of tribute was arranged. Possibly Tafur, by reason of his rank, escaped these horrors. The pilgrims were then allowed to depart, and set off on asses for Jerusalem. There is a picture of a company setting out in E. S. Bates, *Touring in* 1600, London, 1911, p. 210. Tafur's account can be supplemented from the relations of Fabri, Casola (already referred to), Bertrandon de la Brocquière (1432–3) in Thos. Wright, *Early Travels in Palestine* (Bohn's Library), and many others. Much useful information is given by P. S. Allen in *The Age of Erasmus*, Oxford, 1914, pp. 244 *ff.* Breydenbach's *Itinerarium* (1483) was the first account to be printed with views of the places visited. These very important woodcuts are reproduced in Hugh Wm. Davies, *Bernard von Breydenbach and his Journey to the Holy Land*, London, 1911.

[2] The Church of the Holy Sepulchre was only opened twice a year, from Good Friday to Easter Monday, and from the Vigil of the Invention of the Cross until Vespers following. Fabri, I, p. 429. The guardians remained locked in until the arrival of the next season's pilgrims. *Ibid.* p. 428. They were fed upon food handed in through holes in the door. Fabri has left us a moving description of a night spent in the Holy Sepulchre, rendered hideous by the yells of Eastern Christians, the bargaining of traders, and the visitation of innumerable fleas. *Ibid.* pp. 429-30. For a description of the church and the holy sites within its walls, see *A Brief Description of the Holy Sepulchre*, by G. Jeffery, Cambridge, 1919.

[3] The inscriptions are not given by Tafur, but the original editor has printed them from other sources. Both tombs were destroyed in the fire at the beginning of the 19th century.

[4] There is a description of the Dead Sea fruit in Curzon's *Visits to Monasteries in the Levant*, ed. by D. G. Hogarth, Oxford, 1916, p. 228.

[5] The Mosque of Omar marks the site of the Temple of Solomon. Mandeville says he saw the inside, and William of Tyre has described it, but Christians were rigorously excluded. Tafur's account is therefore all the more valuable.

[6] On this ceremony see Röhricht, *Deutsche Pilgerreisen*, p. 21, and authorities quoted at p. 70; also Favine, *Theatre of Honour*, 1623, p. 383.

CHAPTER VII

[1] See above, p. 28, and ch. ii, note 5.

[2] Ines or Agnes Lusignan, sister of Janus II of Cyprus.

[3] Janus III, son of Janus II, was born in 1415 and succeeded his father in 1432. He was a weak and vicious man, and when he died in 1458 the royal house was practically extinct. His only legitimate

child was a daughter, Charlotte, who succeeded him, but it was now merely a question between the Venetians and Genoese, which should take the island. Venice entered into full possession in 1489 and held the island for 82 years against the Turks. The Cardinal was Hugo de Lusignan, the brother of Janus II.

[4] Monstrelet (ch. xxxix) calls this Knight Sir Galeran Savary, and says he threw himself over the King's body, crying out in the Syrian language: "It is the King." Janus II plundered the shores of Egypt and aroused the vengeance of the Mameluke Sultan who attacked the island in July 1426 and captured the King. His captivity lasted 15 months. Ransomed at enormous cost he returned, broken and dispirited, and in 1432 he died.

[5] Monstrelet (ch. xxxix) gives a very different version. He says the captives were bound two and two like beasts, and that the King, likewise bound, followed on a mule.

CHAPTER VIII

[1] On the use of carrier pigeons here, see *Pilgrimage of Symon Semeonis*, by Mario Esposito in *Geographical Journal*, Nov. 1917, p. 349 (1322–23); Schiltberger, *Bondage and Travels*, Hakluyt Society, p. 53; and Röhricht, *Deutsche Pilgerreisen*, p. 24.

[2] The medieval name for Old Cairo.

[3] I have preserved Tafur's expression, which is much more attractive than "crocodiles." The beast next described is, of course, the hippopotamus.

[4] Doubtless some kind of Dervish.

[5] The Mamelukes were the enfranchised slaves who constituted the court and officered the army, and from whose ranks the Sultans were drawn. The Sultan who received Tafur was Barsbai, proclaimed 1422 with the title Malik al-Ashraf. Schiltberger (c. 1420) also notes that no person could be Sultan unless he had been sold. *Travels and Bondage*, Hakluyt Society, p. 51.

[6] Mandeville (ch. vii) has much to say about this balm and the craft by which the Saracens counterfeited it for sale to the Christians. An *azumbre* is about half a gallon, English measure.

[7] On this denomination of the Pyramids see M. Esposito. *The Pilgrimage of Symon Semeonis* in *Geographical Journal*, 1918, Feby. p. 87.

[8] Six arrobas = 24 gallons. Semeonis also saw the elephants and a giraffe at Cairo. *Geographical Journal*, Feby. 1918, p. 86.

[9] Curzon witnessed exactly the same procedure 400 years later. *Visits to Monasteries in the Levant*, Oxford, 1916, p. 78.

[10] This seems to be a game of polo, the most ancient of all games of stick and ball.

NOTES

CHAPTER IX

[1] The journey to Mount Sinai was a very terrible experience and it was said that no pilgrim ever made the journey twice. See for the adventures of later travellers, E. S. Bates, *Touring in* 1600, London, 1911, pp. 223 *ff.*; Röhricht, *Deutsche Pilgerreisen*, p. 23. There is an excellent account of the monastery as it is to-day, and of the famous library, where Tischendorf is still referred to as "the thief," in *Mount Sinai, a Modern Pilgrimage*, by A. Mary R. Dobson, London, 1925. The traffic in mummy survived until the 18th century.

[2] Tafur is hopelessly out here as regards distance, but his meeting with Nicolo de' Conti is extremely interesting. This amazing traveller was a Venetian of noble family who when a young man resided in Damascus as a merchant. It is not known in what year he started on his travels to the East, but he passed through Persia, sailed along the coast of Malabar, visited some parts of the interior of Hindustan and also the islands of Ceylon, Sumatra, and Java. He afterwards went to the south of China and on his return he passed along the coast of Ethiopia, sailed up the Red Sea and reached Cairo, where he lost his wife and children. He returned to Venice in 1444 after many years' absence. He besought the Pope to absolve him from his apostasy, and as a penance the Pope ordered him to relate his adventures to Poggio Bracciolini, the Papal secretary. Poggio wrote them down in Latin, but they were not printed until 1723. An English translation was issued by the Hakluyt Society in 1857 (*India in the 15th Century*). A reference to this volume establishes at once that de' Conti told Tafur much that he did not relate to Poggio. On de' Conti see the Introduction to the Hakluyt volume.

[3] Prester John was a fabulous Christian monarch of Asia. The first mention of him occurs in a chronicle of Otto, Bishop of Freisingen (1145). In 1165 a letter was circulated throughout Europe purporting to be addressed by Prester John to the Emperor Manuel. Later Prester John disappears from Asia and is met with in Abyssinia. By this time, as is clear from de' Conti's narrative (see pp. 87 *f.*), the title Prester or Presbyter was held by the ruler for the time being. See F. Zarncke, *Der Priester Johannes*, 1876–79. There are many references to Prester John in Yule's *Cathay and the Way Thither* (Hakluyt Society) and in his edition of Marco Polo.

CHAPTER X

[1] See ch. ix, note 3.

[2] On Adam's Peak in Ceylon where Adam's grave was supposed to be situated, and which was so lofty that it could only be ascended by

means of chains, see C. R. Beazley, *The Dawn of Modern Geography*, III, pp. 137, 269, 303.

[3] Ibn Batuta witnessed a suicide of this nature at the court of the pagan King of Mul-Java. In modern times an instrument of this kind was preserved at a village of Bengal near Nadiya. It was called *Karavat*, and was a crescent-shaped knife with chains attached to it forming stirrups, so adjusted that the fanatic, placing the edge to the back of his neck and his feet in the stirrups, by giving the latter a violent jerk, cut off his head. See Yule, *Marco Polo*, 3rd ed., II, p. 349, where other instances are given.

CHAPTER XI

[1] I cannot trace any reference to this corsair nor to the church in which he is interred.

CHAPTER XII

[1] For Tafur's earlier experiences at Cyprus see above pp. 64 *ff.*

[2] King Janus III was twice married: (1) to daughter of the Marquis of Monferrato and (2) to Helena Paleologus, daughter of the Despot Theodore of Peloponnese, by whom he had one daughter, Charlotte, who succeeded him.

[3] See above p. 28, and ch. ii, note 5.

[4] This was Antonio Fluvian of Aragon, elected 1421, died 29 Oct. 1437. His death fixes the date of Tafur's return to Rhodes. For Tafur's previous visit see pp. 51 *ff.* See also de Balabre, *Rhodes of the Knights*, Oxford, 1908, p. 19.

[5] Jean de Lastic, died 17 August 1454. It is perhaps unnecessary to emphasize the importance of this detailed description of his election.

CHAPTER XIII

[1] Luis de Amaral y Costa. King Juan of Portugal sent him to the Council of Basle. He was now in the East on a mission to the Emperor. He was one of the ambassadors taken prisoner with Tafur in the neighbourhood of Mainz. See below p. 206.

[2] This was the Bull from the Grand Master issued in 1445, claiming money and help against the preparations being made by the Sultan of Egypt to attack the island.

[3] See below p. 124.

[4] Genoa ruled the island of Chios from 1346 to 1566. It was controlled by what we should call a Chartered Company known as the *Maona*, the members being called *Maonesi*. See W. Miller, *Essays on the Latin Orient*, 1921, pp. 298 *ff.*

[5] After the recovery of Constantinople in 1261 the Genoese were established at Pera where they enforced their own laws and had their own magistrates. From here they controlled their Black Sea trade, the principal establishment there being at Kaffa which Tafur visited later. See pp. 132 *ff.* and Heyd, *Commerce du Levant*, I, pp. 436 *ff;* II, pp. 287 *ff.* There is a description of Pera in Clavijo, *Embassy to Samarcand*, (1403–6). Hakluyt Society, pp. 47-48. The colony disappeared with the Empire. See below p. 149.

[6] This was the real Emperor who had been exiled by his brother. Tafur met the usurper at Trebizond later. See p. 131.

CHAPTER XIV

[1] The date of the institution of this Order is uncertain, but it seems to have been founded by King Juan II of Castille in 1420, to attract nobles and vassals to his standard. The members vowed to defend the Kingdom against the Moors, to obey the Master and to die if needs be for the Faith.

[2] The Emperor John VIII Palaeologus, threatened by the Turks, was anxious to turn the dissensions aroused by the Council of Basle to his advantage. Which party was prepared to send troops and money for the defence of Constantinople? Eventually the Pope's legate outbid the others and the Emperor departed for Europe on 24 Nov. 1437. Tafur witnessed his departure and met him again at Ferrara. See p. 175. The main result of the visit to Europe was the union of the Church, but the Eastern clergy refused to accept it and the Emperor on his return was greeted with ribaldry and insults. He died in 1448. Constantinople fell to the Turks 5 years later. *Cambridge Medieval History*, IV, pp. 621 *ff.* Tafur's account of his family history is not easy to follow, but the Spanish editor discusses it at length at pp. 480 *ff.*

[3] In 1204 a powerful fleet of Latin Christians, French, German and Venetians, setting out on the Fourth Crusade, turned aside from their holy purpose and besieged and took Constantinople. The Greeks recaptured Constantinople in 1261, but the Empire never recovered from the catastrophe. See *Cambridge Medieval History*, IV, pp. 415 *ff.*

[4] The columns and the horses are described later. See below pp. 164 *ff.*

[5] On the capture of Constantinople the Greeks found a new centre in Nicea round which to rally. Michael Palaeologus, who had married a princess of the Imperial family, recovered Constantinople on 15 August 1261, and placed the Imperial crown on his head in the church of St. Sophia. *Cambridge Medieval History*, IV, pp. 427 *ff.*

[6] Afterwards Constantine XI Palaeologus. He died fighting after the capture of Constantinople.

[7] This was the 24 November 1437.

CHAPTER XV

[1] Murad (Amurath) II (1421–1451). Bertrandon de la Brocquiere, who saw him in 1433, describes him as "a little, short, thick man with the physiognomy of a Tartar." Wright, *Early Travels in Palestine*, p. 346.

CHAPTER XVI

[1] Trebizond was then the capital of an independent Empire which had been set up after the Latin conquest of Constantinople in 1204. The Emperor John IV Comnenus had recently murdered his father. The father, Alexios IV, is generally believed to have been alive as late as 1446, but Tafur's record shows that he was dead in 1437 or early in 1438. Finlay's *Greece* (Vol. IV, p. 399) needs correction. Tafur's evidence is accepted by Mr. Wm. Miller. See *Eng. Hist. Review*, 1923, p. 409. Trebizond was annexed by the Ottoman Sultan Mohammed II in 1461. For a description (1404) see Clavijo, *Embassy to Samarcand*, Hakluyt Society, p. 62.

[2] Kaffa was more than the headquarters of Genoese trade in the East. It was with Galata the colonial capital of the Latin Orient. The Genoese may have been established there before 1204, but the colony probably resulted from the Greek restoration of 1261. Schiltberger (c. 1420) describes Kaffa as surrounded by a double wall and containing 6000 houses within the narrower and 40,000 within the wider of these defences. It was the seat of a great mission diocese and in it were six kinds of religious faith. Schiltberger, *Bondage and Travels*, Hakluyt Society, pp. 49-50; Beazley, *Dawn of Modern Geography*, III, pp. 371, 477; II, p. 453.

[3] Tana and Ryxabaque were names for the Sea of Azov. The Sea of Bacu is the Caspian Sea.

[4] Compare Schiltberger p. 48: "they take a piece of flesh, cut it into slices, place it under the saddle and ride on it, and eat it when they are hungry: but they salt it first and think that it will not spoil, because it becomes dry from the warmth of the horse and becomes tender under the saddle from riding."

[5] The Don was the great starting point of one of the trade routes for China. See C. R. Beazley, *Dawn of Modern Geography*, II, pp. 455 *ff.*

[6] The narrative of this embassy (1403–1406) by Ruy Gonsalez de Clavijo has been preserved. See translation by Sir Clements Markham, Hakluyt Society, 1859.

CHAPTER XVII

[1] On these cisterns see W. R. Lethaby and H. Swainson, *Sancta Sophia*, 1894, pp. 19, 196. Clavijo says that ten galleys could float there (p. 38). A *bota* is a liquid measure containing 516 litres. I cannot explain its use here.

[2] This was in fact a statue of Justinian which was destroyed by lightning in 1492. An excellent drawing exists in the Serai Library, reproduced in J. Ebersolt, *Constantinople Byzantine et les Voyageurs du Levant*, Paris, 1919, p. 30. Pierre Gilles, naturalist and author, who was sent to the Levant by Francis I of France in 1544, found portions of the statue in the melting house where ordnance was cast. The proportions were colossal: the leg exceeded the height of a man, the nose was 9 inches long.

[3] Clavijo (1403) saw this picture in the church of S. Maria de la Dessetria. He says that it was so heavy that it took three or four men to carry it with leathern cords. *Embassy to Samarcand* (Hakluyt Society), p. 44. The picture was destroyed when the Turks entered the city, the Janissaries having cut it into pieces for charms. W. H. Hutton, *Constantinople* (Med. Towns Series), pp. 263, 266. The picture seems to have been kept from time to time in different churches.

[4] This church seems to have been that of the Blachernae. It was seen in ruins by Gilles (1544). Ebersolt, *Constantinople Byzantine et les Voyageurs du Levant*, Paris, 1919, p. 81.

[5] The church of the Pantokrator, a triple church founded by John Comnenus and his wife Irene who died in 1124. The central church was the mausoleum of the Comneni.

[6] The Hippodrome and the Serpent column. The column, removed from Delphi by Constantine, bore at its first making the golden tripod which the Greeks consecrated to Apollo after the victory over Xerxes at Platea. The names of the cities inscribed on the coils may still be traced. The three heads have long since disappeared. One is in the museum. For the history of the column and the inscriptions see Frazer, *Pausanias's Description of Greece*, V, pp. 299 *ff.*

[7] It is not known to what statue Tafur is referring, nor is the story found in the records of other travellers.

[8] A legend possibly connected with the Baths of Zeuxippus, which were close to the Palace and the Hippodrome.

[9] The obelisk was brought from Heliopolis by Theodosius and has remained ever since in the place where he erected it.

[10] Of the buildings which formed the Imperial Palace only the ruins remain. The reference to the library is interesting, for there has been much discussion as to its whereabouts.

[11] There had been a siege by the Turks in 1422 which lasted from June to August, but it was abandoned. The Emperor then made peace,

but on condition that he paid a heavy tribute and surrendered several places on the Black Sea. *Cambridge Medieval History*, IV, pp. 689, 690.

CHAPTER XVIII

[1] Brusa occupies the lower slopes of the Mysian Olympus. The city was founded, it was said, at the suggestion of Hannibal. It was taken by the Turks in 1327 after a siege of ten years and continued to be their capital until Murad I removed to Adrianople.

[2] On Pera see above p. 115.

[3] Salonica, after many vicissitudes, was finally captured from the Venetians in 1430, and 7000 of its inhabitants were sold into slavery. *Cambridge Medieval History*, IV, p. 690; W. Miller, *Essays on the Latin Orient*, 1921, pp. 279 *ff.*

[4] See above p. 48.

CHAPTER XIX

[1] The date of Tafur's return to Venice was 22 May 1438.

[2] A more restrained account of this episode and of the events which followed can be read in Hazlitt, *Venetian Republic*, 1st ed. I. p. 420. The Pope was Alexander III. Tradition relates that he came to Venice in disguise in 1177 and went to the monastery of the Carità, where he was received as a simple priest or, according to another version, as a scullion. A Frenchman named Comodo is said to have recognized him. The story has no historical basis. See G. Tassini, *Curiosità Veneziane*, 4th ed. Venice, 1887, p. 148. The sea-fight took place on May 26 1177. The rout of the Germans was complete. Three slabs of red marble in the porch of St. Mark's point out the spot where Frederick knelt and the Pope with tears of joy raised him and gave him the kiss of peace. The legend related by Tafur, telling how the Pope set his foot on the neck of the prostrate Emperor, is of later date. The picture is in the Sala del Maggior Consiglio in the Doge's palace.

CHAPTER XX

[1] These famous bronze horses probably adorned the triumphal arch of Nero and afterwards that of Trajan. Constantine sent them to Constantinople whence the Doge Dandolo brought them to Venice in 1204.

[2] The Campanile was begun in 888 and rebuilt in 1148 and 1329. It collapsed on July 14 1902, and has been rebuilt.

[3] The two granite columns were erected here in 1180. One bears the Lion of St. Mark, and the other, not St. George, but St. Theodore on a crocodile, the patron of the ancient republic before the body of St. Mark was brought from Egypt in 827. The columns lay on the

ground for several years until a Lombard engineer, Nicolo, who seems from some cause, possibly his addiction to play, to have been called Barattiero, raised and secured them. Barattiero, seeing that gaming had been interdicted in Venice, bargained for the grant of a monopoly in his favour to keep the space between the columns for gaming tables. Hazlitt, *Venetian Republic*, I. p. 433. The concession was made, but as a corrective the Council ordered that public executions should take place there. Tafur is curiously out in his reference to a right of sanctuary.

[4] Tafur's name for crocodiles is *cocatriz*. See above p. 69.

[5] The reference is to the traitorous conspiracy of Marino Faliero, elected Doge in 1354 at the age of 76. Tafur is too generous to his memory. He was executed on 17 April 1355. Hazlitt, *Venetian Republic*, 1st ed. III. pp. 145 *ff*.

[6] Francesco Bussone, born at Carmagnola, a small village in the district of Turin in 1390. He was convicted of traitorous dealings with the Visconti and executed on 5 May 1432.

[7] The Pietà established in 1346 to receive foundlings. See G. Tassini, *Curiosità Veneziane*, 4th ed. Venice, 1887, p. 559.

CHAPTER XXI

[1] The war between Venice and Milan dragged on with intervals for many years, only ceasing with the death of Filippo Maria Visconti in 1447. On the whole he was the loser, for Genoa revolted and Venice extended her frontiers westwards.

[2] A galapago is a tortoise—rather a good name for these early monitors.

[3] Pope Eugenius decreed the Council of Basle dissolved and summoned another at Ferrara in January 1438. A year later it was transferred to Florence. The union of the Greek and Roman Churches was accepted by the Emperor, but the Greek people refused to adopt it.

[4] Niccolo III, twelfth Marquis of Ferrara (1383–1441). He was then 55. Tafur can be wayward in the matter of ages. See pp. 73 and 215. The mention of Galalon is not easy to follow, but Diego de Valera, *Cronica de España abreviada*, Pt. IV, cap. 9, refers to the subject. He writes: "The chronicles of Spain and France say that this [the defeat at Roncesvalles] was caused by a French count called Galalon, some of whose descendants are still living in France. And whenever any one of these dines with others the bread is placed on the table before him upside down." Galalon (Ganelon) was the traitor in the Song of Roland.

[5] The contemporary evidence concerning this tragedy appears to have been destroyed, and it is not easy to distinguish truth from fiction. Niccolo's first wife died in 1397. In 1418 he married Parisina

Malateſta. Her ſtepson Ugo became her lover, and on the night of 20 May 1425 the guilty pair were arreſted and thruſt into gaol. The next day they were executed. The Marquis had many baſtards after Parisina's death. His third marriage was with Ricciarda da Saluzzio in 1431, with the ſtipulation that even if he had sons by her, Leonello, a baſtard born in 1407, should succeed, and Martin V legitimized him. Gardner, *Dukes and Poets of Ferrara*, 1904, pp. 37 *ff.*

[6] I cannot explain this reference, but she muſt have been a very fleet-footed lady.

[7] Niccolo Piccinino. Tafur had met him before. See above ch. ii, note 8, and p. 30.

[8] Filippo Maria Visconti was a son of Gian Galeazzo. He succeeded on the death of his brother in 1412. He was the laſt of the Visconti tyrants and ruled for 35 years. He was extremely ugly and so sensitive that he scarcely showed himself abroad. He lived in secret chambers and when he went out he refused all salutations in the ſtreets.

[9] Filippo Maria had no male heir. His baſtard daughter Bianca married Francesco Sforza in 1441. Francesco succeeded to the ducal throne, after a brief republican interval, in 1450.

CHAPTER XXII

[1] The famous condottiere who married the widow of Filippo Maria Visconti.

[2] If this is Lucerne Tafur has got his itinerary badly mixed.

[3] Adam of Usk crossed this pass in 1402, being "drawn in an ox-wagon half dead with cold and with mine eyes blindfolded, leſt I should see the dangers of the pass." *Chronicle* ed. by Sir E. M. Thompson, 2nd ed., p. 242.

[4] There is a description of Basle at this time by Aeneas Sylvius, afterwards Pius II, translated in Creighton, *Hiſtory of the Papacy*, new ed. II, p. 199. The Council assembled in 1431 and dragged on until 1449.

[5] D. Juan de Silva, firſt Count of Cifuentes, Alférez major to King Juan II. The Alférez major was the officer who had charge of the ſtandard of a city on the occasion of a royal visit.

[6] Probably Maria Stein, formerly a Benedictine Abbey with a famous pilgrimage church.

[7] See above p. 150.

[8] The old Königsſtuhl erected in 1376 at Rhense near Coblenz has been replaced by a modern reſtoration. The laſt Imperial election took place there in 1400.

[9] I cannot identify. It may be Johannisberg, but that is many miles from Coblenz.

NOTES

CHAPTER XXIII

[1] Dietrich II von Mörs, elected in 1414, died 1464, one of the most powerful of the princes of the Church. Notwithstanding Tafur's hint he took vigorous steps to reform the morals of the clergy.

[2] Adolf II, first Duke of Cleves 1371-1448. His second wife was Marie, sister of Philip the Good.

[3] Arnold of Egmont, invested 1423 with the Dukedom of Guelders and Zutphen. He died in 1473.

[4] This cannot be Lille. Tafur must be referring to some small place close to Bois-le-duc, and has confused the name.

[5] Philip the Good, who ruled from 1419 to 1467. He married Isabella of Portugal in 1430, the daughter of Juan I of Portugal and Philippa of Lancaster.

[6] John of Luxemburg, bastard son of Waleram III of Luxemburg, born 1390, legitimized 1436 and died 1466, one of the foremost soldiers of his day. He was twice captured in battle. The Order of the Golden Fleece was bestowed on him in 1433, but not in the manner related by Tafur. He seems to be confusing Jean de la Trimouille with the Sire de Montaigu, who was guilty of cowardice and was expelled from the Order in 1431.

[7] Afterwards Charles the Bold, born in 1433, died before Nancy in 1477. He married in 1468 Margaret of York, sister of Edward IV.

CHAPTER XXIV

[1] The translation of Tafur's account of Bruges and Sluys has already appeared in my *Bruges and its Past*, Bruges and London, 2nd ed., 1926. Bruges was still the leading mart of Western Europe, but it was just past the greatest days of its prosperity.

[2] The Waterhalle, so called from the fact that it was built astride the Reye. It occupied the whole of the E. side of the Grand' Place, but was pulled down in 1787. It can be seen to advantage in the reproduction from Marc Gheeraerts' great panorama of 1562 reproduced in my book.

[3] The reference is to the revolt of 1437. On Whit-Monday in that year the Duke was cut off at the Bouverie Gate and barely escaped with his life. A year later Bruges had to submit and a dreadful vengeance was taken.

[4] Sluys, the ancient sea-port of Bruges, is now an inland town, having been left high and dry by the silting up of the estuary of the Zwin.

[5] Ghent revolted in 1452. Thanks to the strength of its defences it was able to withstand a blockade of more than a year. But the

defeat at Gavere on 23 July 1453 reduced the rebels to submission. On 30 July, 2000 of the burghers knelt in their shirts to Duke Philip and begged for mercy, and the town accepted the most humiliating terms.

[6] In 1415 the Emperor Sigismund gave Antwerp the right to hold two annual fairs. From that date the town began to prosper as never before, but it was not until the beginning of the 16th century that Antwerp became the great centre of the trade of the North. Bruges was still a formidable rival. See J. Wegg, *Antwerp* 1477-1559, London, 1916, and Pirenne, *Histoire de Belgique*, II, p. 440.

CHAPTER XXV

[1] See above p. 111.

[2] This must have been Duke Stephen of Bavaria—Ingoldstadt, the son of Duke Frederick of Bavaria—Landshut.

[3] The Council of Constance which burnt John Hus was summoned in 1414. See J. H. Wylie, *The Council of Constance to the Death of John Hus*, London 1900 (Ford Lectures for 1900).

[4] Not the great inquisitor, but an earlier ecclesiastic who died in 1468. He was one of the ambassadors sent by the Pope to the Council at Basle.

[5] Kaspar Schlick came of a good citizen family in Franconia and in 1416 entered Sigismund's chancery as secretary. He became the trusted adviser and friend of the Emperor, who conferred riches and distinctions upon him. He continued to be chancellor under Albert II and Frederick III.

[6] From this point for several pages Tafur's account can be supplemented from the *Wanderbuch* of Johannes Butzbach (1478-1526). A German translation by D. J. Becker of the Latin MS. at Laach was issued in 1869 at Regensburg. It has been reissued in the *Insel Bücherei*, No. 26 (1912). See my article in *English Historical Review*, January 1917.

[7] Compare Butzbach, *Wanderbuch*, chapters vi and vii, and *English Historical Review*, January 1917, p. 29.

[8] Frederick II, the ally of the Emperor Sigismund in the Husite Wars.

CHAPTER XXVI

[1] Albert of Austria, son-in-law of the Emperor Sigismund, succeeded as King of the Romans in 1437. He died while campaigning against the Turks in 1439.

[2] In 1420 the Venetians had conquered the whole of Friuli and had extended their territory N.W. to the Carnic Alps.

[3] The less said about Barbara of Cilli the better. There was, of course, no marriage with the King of Poland, who was only a boy, but when Sigismund was in his last illness the Empress conspired against him with the view of marrying the King of Poland after the Emperor's death and acquiring the crowns of Bohemia, Poland and Hungary. The Empress was then 45. The plot was discovered and the Empress was imprisoned. Albert restored her to liberty, but she died in 1457. See J. Aschbach, *Geschichte Kaiser Sigismunds*, Hamburg, 1845, IV, pp. 391, 395.

[4] Wladislaus III (1434-1444) was only nine years old when he became King and only twenty when he died on the battlefield of Varna, fighting against the Turks.

CHAPTER XXVII

[1] There is a delightful view of Vienna in 1489 from the "Babenberger Stammbaum" in the Klosterneuburg, reproduced in J. Schwerdfeger, *Vienna Gloriosa*, Vienna, 1923, p. 26.

[2] The Empress Elizabeth was a lady of much courage and determination. Her son was not born until after her husband's death, whereupon she caused the sacred crown of Hungary to be stolen and set upon the infant's head. The diary of her attendant, Helene Kottanner, who purloined the crown, is preserved in the K. K. Bibliothek at Vienna (No. 2920). It was printed by S. Endlicher in 1846 and is the subject of one of Gustav Freytag's well-known *Bilder aus der deutschen Vergangenheit* (vom Mittelalter zur Neuzeit, ch. x). It is an exciting episode, and there is a very human touch in the description of the baby as having "little pleasure in his coronation and crying with a loud voice."

[3] Frederick III (1440-1493), the weakest of all the successors of Otto the Great. For his character see Stubbs, *Lectures on Medieval and Modern History*, p. 387. His son Maximilian married Mary of Burgundy.

[4] See above p. 214.

[5] Il Salone in the Palazzo del Municipio, built by Pietro Cozzo between 1172 and 1219. The walls are adorned by 300 frescoes painted after 1420 by Giov. Miretto and others.

[6] Pietro d'Abano (1250-1316), Italian philosopher and physician. He died a natural death, but was twice tried by the Inquisition on charges of practising magic. He died before the second trial was concluded and was burnt in effigy.

CHAPTER XXVIII

[1] In January 1439 the Pope transferred the Council to Florence. He set out on January 16th, so that the date of Tafur's arrival at Ferrara can be definitely fixed. See Creighton, *History of the Papacy*, new ed. II, pp. 340 *ff.* How Tafur saw all he describes and reached Ferrara 25 days after his arrival at Breslau is a mystery. The journey to Vienna took 12 days (p. 219).

[2] This unique engineering feat is described in Hazlitt, *Venetian Republic*, 1st ed. IV, pp. 141 *ff.* A flotilla of 25 barks and 6 galleys was carried across the Tyrolese Alps on carriages drawn by men and oxen into the Lago di San Andrea, and thence across Monte Baldo into the Lago di Garda. The distance covered was 200 miles and the cost was estimated at 15,000 ducats or more. It was mid-winter and the ground was covered in deep snow. The whole flotilla was afloat in Feby. 1439. Tafur evidently witnessed the transporting of one of the last of the boats.

[3] On Piccinino see above p. 30.

[4] It is not easy to follow Tafur here. The Pisans joined in the First Crusade and proved their valour at the capture of Jerusalem, from which they derived much commercial advantage. The reference is probably to one of the troubles which fell upon the luckless city in the 13th century. In 1405 Pisa was sold to Florence.

[5] See above p. 28.

[6] Tafur refers to the singular phenomenon about 1½ miles from Pietramala, at the foot of the Monte di Fo, known as "I Fuochi." It consists of emanations of inflammable gas, which on being ignited present something of a volcanic appearance. The flames are about a foot from the ground and are seen to best advantage at night.

CHAPTER XXIX

[1] A Basilian monastery founded by Roger I, transferred to the mainland when Charles V rebuilt the fort of San Salvatore.

[2] The mosaics are still the glory of the church and place it among the finest of medieval churches.

[3] Trapani is still the chief seat of the Sicilian coral trade.

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